

ST John the Evangelist

Christian Formation Handbook

- 2010-2011
- Director of Christian Formation
- Horace Shows

THERE WILL BE NO PARENT MEETINGS FOR CHRISTIAN FORMATION FOR THE 2010/2011 SCHOOL YEAR!!!

Because there are no parent meetings and **there have been changes in policy, it is critical that every student and their parents read and understand the Christian Formation Handbook.** Because of our hectic life style, the handbook has been written as briefly as possible.

This handbook contains information on the following:

1. Arrival of Students
2. Departure of Students
3. High School Service Hours and Retreats
4. Discipline
5. Absentee and Make-up Policy
6. General Rules and Regulations
7. Sacramental Prep
8. Parental Participation
9. Registration for Christian Formation – 2011/2012
10. Class Lesson Schedules for every grade

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHRISTIAN FORMATION HANDBOOK

Pastor: Father Eric Gyan
Director of Religious Education: Horace Shows

“As it is the parents who have given life to their children, on them lies the gravest obligation of educating their family. They must therefore be recognized as being primarily and principally responsible for their education. The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is **almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute. It is therefore the duty of parents to create a family atmosphere inspired by love and devotion to God and their fellow-men which will promote an integrated, personal and social education of their children.**”

Vatican Council II
Declaration on Christian Education
Paragraph 3

Philosophy of the Christian Formation Program

The primary purpose of the Christian Formation program of St. John Parish is **to support parents in their role as primary educators of their children** as they lead them to grow in awareness of the presence of God. Growth in faith implies formation, information, and transformation, and is the responsibility of the educator to support those parents who strive to teach their children to live the Gospel as part of the Catholic community and in developing a Christ-centered environment in today's world.

The policies and provisions contained in this Handbook are to help parents and students in their awareness of the importance of continuing religious education. We thereby hope to support, encourage, and enable parents to help their children learn more about the Catholic Christian faith. **“Catechetical programs for children... are not effective without a strong adult faith community and the full and active involvement of parents”** (James Merhaut, Families & Faith). St. John's extends the opportunity and encourages all parents to participate in meaningful ways in the spiritual growth of their children.

In order to ensure cooperation and understanding between the faculty, administration, families, and students of the St. John Christian Formation program, parents are asked to review this handbook carefully with your students who attend Christian Formation classes.

The policies and procedures which regulate the Christian Formation program at St. John are outlined as follows:

ARRIVAL OF STUDENTS

When dropping off students in grades one through six, parents should park in designated parking spots and walk to the education building with their children. **Do not allow older children to walk younger children to the building. No student in grades one through six should walk in the parking lot without adult supervision.** This policy is for the safety of your child. If it is raining, students may be dropped off under the covered driveway. All are to report to the education building **no earlier than fifteen minutes prior to class and wait in the halls until an adult gives them permission to enter their classroom.**

Students in grades seven through eleven are to report to the community center for classes.

DEPARTURE OF STUDENTS

Parents are to park in a parking spot and walk to the education building when picking up their children. Parents should wait in the commons area till the bell rings. Parents should not leave the commons area until the bell rings. Waiting in the halls can be a distraction to the students. When the bell rings, parents are to go to their child's or children's classroom(s) and retrieve their children. **The teachers will not release their children until a parent comes to the door for them. No student in grades one through six is to walk in the parking lot without adult supervision.**

HIGH SCHOOL SERVICE HOURS AND RETREATS

In preparation for Confirmation, each high school student is to perform fifteen service hours during each grade level (9, 10, & 11). Students are to perform 5 hours for the St. John community, 5 hours for the community outside of St. John, and 5 more hours that can be performed in either sector. The service hours are to be filled out on a service hour record sheet and should be signed by an adult who has witnessed the service. Forms will be given to the students during catechism and may also be picked up at the Christian Formation office. **Students are to turn in their service hour record sheet each year by the end of May.**

Every high school student in Christian Formation must attend one retreat in the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades. He or she also must also attend a Confirmation retreat prior to Confirmation.

DISCIPLINE

The time for classroom religious instruction in Christian Formation classes is limited so it is of the utmost importance that students cooperate fully in order to make the best use of their time. The teacher will make the students aware of the classroom rules, the expectations, and the consequences of choosing to misbehave.

Our Christian Formation staff is here to help each student learn and grow in his or her faith. For the most part, this is done in a group setting. When a student acts in certain ways, he or she will need individual consideration and help that the classroom setting does not allow time for. Being sent to the office is not the same as it is in public school. **The true intent will be to give the student some one-on-one time to help determine how we may best help him or her. Parents please instill this understanding in your children.**

Students will be referred to the office each and every time he or she is 1). rude to anyone, 2). has to repeatedly be asked to stop a particular behavior during a class, 3). makes negative remarks or statements. The fourth reason for a referral to the office would be if the student causes an often recurring problem (ex. Not getting along with another student). Communication is critical and a student's parents will be consulted each and every time he or she is referred to the office.

ABSENTEE POLICY FOR GRADES ONE THROUGH SIX

Students in grades one through six are allowed up to **three absences** for the Christian Formation year. For every absence after the first three, a student is to turn in a make-up assessment for the chapter that was covered in the class session he/she missed. A schedule of the chapters covered in class can be found in the back of this handbook. The Assessments can be found on the web at www.faithfirst.com. When you come to the home page, click on "Assessments" which will be found on the right hand side of the page under the heading "HIGHLIGHTS." Be sure to click on "Legacy Edition" and follow the prompts. Once the assessment is finished you will be able to email the results to the Christian Formation office at hshows@eatel.net. If your child gets less than 80% of the answers right, he/she may simply take the assessment again. You should receive a reply from the Christian Formation office within a day. If you do not receive a reply within 48 hours, please call the Christian Formation office at 673-8402. Print out a hard copy of the assessment results for your child to turn in to his/her teacher when he/she returns to class.

If you do not have access to a computer for any reason, call the office at 673-8402 and request a hard copy of the assessment which will be given to your child by his teacher the next time he/she comes to class. The student is to turn in the completed assessment the next time he/she attends class.

ABSENTEE POLICY FOR GRADES SEVEN THROUGH ELEVEN

Students in grades seven through eleven are allowed **one** absence for the Christian Formation year. For every absence after the first one, a student is to turn in a make-up assignment to his/her catechists when he/she attends the next class. The student is to contact the Christian Formation office in order to obtain the assessment. Students can email the office at hshows@eatel.net. An email will then be sent to the student with the necessary make-up materials in it. If a student does not have a computer, he/she is to pick up the make-up material at the Christian Formation office or the church office during the office hours.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Students are not allowed to bring toys, sports equipment, electronic devices, or cell phones into the education center on class days. The students are not to enter the education center with gum, drinks, or candy. Pencils or pens are not to be carried to class by the students for safety reasons. Pencils are supplied in the classrooms. If a student is seen with a cell phone inside the education building, the community center, or the church, it will be confiscated and a parent will be able to pick it up at the Christian Formation office at a later time.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Reception of the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation will take place in the Church Parish of residence. Sacramental preparation classes are separate from regular weekly religion classes. Sacramental preparation will consist of mandatory parent meetings and instructional classes to be attended by candidates (when applicable) and parents. Further procedures and requirements will be mailed by the Church to parents of eligible students during the year. Please ask the D.R.E. if you have any questions concerning Sacramental preparation.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

It is obvious that your child's Christian Formation is important to you by the sacrifices you make to ensure that your children are in the Christian Formation program. Parental participation is important in order to emphasize the importance of the classes to the students and to allow many parents to share with the students throughout the course of the year. Your wealth of lived experience is something that students do not have and can benefit from greatly. All parents are invited and are encouraged to attend our classes.

The teachers and I are excited about having parents in the class on a regular basis. This will help the students remain focused on the lesson and will send a message to the students that the Christian Formation program is important. It is my conviction that those parents who are able to participate in classes will receive in the process of giving. We ask that you report to the office and sign in prior to attending a class.

All policies of the St. John Christian Formation program are in place for the purpose of providing the safest and best possible program for our children. **The most critical factor in passing on the faith to your child is the home.** Realizing your importance in the process and realizing you know your child/children better than anyone else, we at St. John are here for you and want to hear from you. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call me at 673-8402 or e-mail me at hshows@eatel.net.

REGISTRATION FOR CHRISTIAN FORMATION – 2011-2012

Christian Formation registration for the 2011-2012 school year will be held the **entire month of March**. Parents can register at the Christian Formation office during the work day or during class times. Registration fee for a family with one student is \$30.00. The fee for a family with two students is \$40.00 and for a family with three or more students, the fee is \$50.00. **A late fee of \$20.00 will be assessed beginning April 1st**. The purpose of the late fee is not to bring in more money but to encourage all parents to register early. If all were to register in March, we in the Christian Formation office would be able to enter all the necessary information into the computer, schedule all students and volunteers, and get everyone their schedules by the end of June. This would allow ample time to make corrections. All of this would result in the staff in the Christian Formation office being able to serve you better on a number of levels. It is our hope and prayer that all will register for Christian Formation next March.

Yours in Christ,

Horace Shows