

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
Religious Education Handbook 2020-21

Table of Contents

Religious Education Calendar 2020-21.....	2
Faith Formation Mission.....	3
Scope of Faith Formation K-8.....	3
Safe Environment	4
Expectations for Our Collaboration.....	5
Code of Conduct.....	5-6
Attendance Policy.....	6
Dress Code.....	6
Registration.....	7
Emergency Contact	8
Inclement Weather Policy.....	8
Safety Procedures... ..	8
Photo/Video Consent	9
Online “Virtual” Learning Consent	9
Online “Virtual” Learning Consent Form.....	10
Opt Out Form for Formation in Christian Chastity.....	11

Blessed Sacrament Church Religious Education Calendar 2020-2021

Week #	Wednesday 7-8:15 PM	Sunday 10:30-11:45 AM
1	September 23- First Day	September 27- First Day
2	September 30 Form, Christian Chastity: 1st, 5 th -8 th	October 4 Form, Christian Chastity: 1st, 5 th -8 th
3	October 7	October 18
4	October 21	October 25
5	October 28	November 1
6	November 4	November 8
7	November 18	November 15
8	December 2: <i>Confessions</i>	November 22
9	December 9	December 6
10	December 16	December 13
11	January 6 Return	December 20
12	January 13	January 3 Return
13	January 27	January 10
14	February 3	January 24
15	February 10	January 31
16	February 24	February 7
17	March 3	February 21
18	March 10	February 28
19	March 17	March 7
20	March 24	March 14
21	April 14 Return	March 21
22	April 21	April 11 Return
23	April 28	April 18
24	May 5	April 25
25	May 12	May 2

- **Confirmation Retreats: TBD**
- **Confirmation Rehearsal** Nov. 8, 6:30 PM
- **Confirmation Liturgy** Nov.9, 7:00 PM

- **First Reconciliation** Saturday, February 6, 9-12 AM

- **First Communion Rehearsal** Sunday April 17, 6-7:30 PM (dinner provided)
- **First Communion**
 - OPTION 1: Saturday, April 24, 10 AM
 - OPTION 2: Saturday, May 1, 10 AM

Faith Formation Mission

“[T]he definitive aim of catechesis is to put people...in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ...” – Catechesis Tradendae, John Paul II, ¶ 5

We thank you for entrusting us with forming your child in our Faith. We recognize that as parents, you are your child’s primary teacher of Faith, and we are honored to collaborate with you in putting your child in communion with Christ.

Be assured that our program is faithful to Christ’s teaching, relying upon the Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, and guided by the teaching authority of the Catholic Church (the Magisterium). We ensure that the Faith is delivered without error, in its entirety and unity. Our catechesis is Christocentric, Theocentric, content-based, integrative, age-appropriate and community-oriented as it informs the Catholic identity of our diverse students. Furthermore, our program fosters an appropriate faithful environment which cultivates a personal relationship with God, through diverse methodologies, teaching aides, and curriculum materials.

Scope of Faith Formation K-8

Adapted with permission from Spirit of Truth Series summaries

Kindergarten: The Blessed Trinity & Holy Family Introduction to the loving goodness of the Blessed Trinity, Holy Family, & Saints. Additionally, why virtue is good and sin is bad, and how to speak to God in prayer.

Grade One: God is Love

Students develop an awareness of God as our Father in Heaven, who created them in His image and likeness, and who loves them unconditionally. Additionally: intro to Mass parts, and reality of sin in connection with the Sacrament of Confession. Continued emphasis on prayer.

Grade Two: Our Life in Jesus

Students focus on how much children are loved by Jesus Christ, and how His death and Resurrection has opened the way to Heaven.

Additionally: parts of the Mass, lives and lessons of the saints, more ways to pray, special focus on the Sacraments of Confession and Eucharist.

Grade Three: Kingdom of God & The Church

Students learn about the Catholic Church, the Holy Spirit and how He guides Her, and how Jesus continues His mission through Her.

Review of the Trinity and all seven Sacraments, prayer and living as children of God, Jesus' Parables of the Kingdom, and Mary as the Mother of the Church.

Grade Four: Jesus Teaches Us How to Live

God's plan to save his people from sin (Salvation History), how we participate in that plan, and the many ways God helps us in our pilgrimage on earth to Heaven through His word, His law, and his Church.

Grade Five: The Sacraments

This year provides an in-depth exploration of God's grace in the Sacraments, with a focus on what a Sacrament is and why Jesus instituted them.

Grade Six: Sacred Scripture

Students spend this year immersed in God's Word in the Sacred Scriptures, and explore how the Bible communicates God's plan of salvation to us.

Grade Seven: Living as a Disciple of Christ

This year includes four units in which middle school students explore the topics of: (a) Jesus and the Gospel message: unifying themes in Scripture and an in-depth examination of the four Gospels; (b) personal growth: the origin, dignity, and destiny of the human person; (c) each of the Seven Sacraments; (d) prayer: its elements, qualities, and challenges, ways of praying, and Mary and the saints as models of prayer. Confirmation prep is begun in this year.

Grade Eight: The Communion of the Faithful

This year includes five units for middle school students to build on their understanding of: (a) personal growth: our vocation to love and our responsibilities to God and each other; (b) morality: conscience formation through prayer and God's gift of an objective moral standard; (c) the Citizen and Government: the natural rights of all persons and the purpose of government; (d) God's Plan for Marriage and the Family: our identity as male and female, purposes and abuses of sexuality, and resisting temptation to avoid sin and grow in virtue. Youth are confirmed in fall of the eighth grade year.

Safe Environment

All program employees, staff, and volunteers who have direct contact with children are subject to a background check and the completion of a VIRTUS seminar.

As part of its policy, the diocesan Office for the Protection of Children & Youth mandates certain lessons regarding safe environment be conducted each year in grades 1, 5, 6, 7, 8. These lessons are conducted in fall of the program year. Prior to the lessons' being taught, parents for those grades are notified and provided an Opt-Out form if they do not wish their children to participate in the lessons. The Opt-Out form is also included at the end of this handbook.

Expectations for Our Collaboration

Parish Staff--

- Ensure that volunteer catechists and staff are recruited & trained to create a Christian environment for conducting faith formation
- Ensure that background checks in compliance with diocesan policy for child safety are conducted
- Manage medical, behavioral, or other problems as they arise

Parents--

- Ensure the child's excellent attendance, either in person or online
- Communicate special needs or circumstances to the DRE and/or catechist
- Are encouraged to serve a vital part of the child's faith formation
- Lead a sacramental life by attending Mass or if not possible, by attending Mass virtually

*Faith Formation does not replace the need for the Sacraments--in fact, it is intended to form your child for his/her fullest participation in them. **Your child is still expected to attend Mass**; it is a grave responsibility for all Catholics who have received first Communion to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.*

Students--

Are entitled to receive catechetical instruction which adheres to authentic Catholic teaching.

It is expected that students will abide by the **Code of Conduct**:

- Demonstrate good attendance
- enter ready and eager to learn.
- Show respect to all adults and other students.

- Use only appropriate language at all times
- Respect the property of others
- Participate in class, whether online or in person
- If a student's conduct repeatedly presents concerns which are not improved by simple reminders, the parent will be contacted for assistance. If the conduct in question persists, a conference including the DRE, parents, and (if age-appropriate), the student will be held to determine the path forward. "Expectations for Our Collaboration: Students" lists specific expectations.
- It is assumed that, by consenting to the conduct policy on the registration form, the parent will cooperate with parish staff and volunteers regarding standards of behavior.

Catechists--

- Create a faith-filled, faithful environment for learning
- Will be prepared to catechize the curriculum for the given level, and teach it
- Will be a Christian role model
- Communicate with the parent regarding the child's development in faith

Attendance

If attendance during a sacramental preparation year falls below 80%, the year will have to be repeated.

We respectfully request that good attendance be maintained in every year of faith formation. Our catechists are volunteers who plan carefully with the needs of students in mind. Students who regularly miss class tend to have, at best, spotty knowledge of the Faith. Our goal is that they know it well and love it!

Dress Code

Students are invited to dress for comfort. Jeans, sneakers, and sweatpants are fine.

Leggings may be worn if the top is long enough to entirely cover the buttocks.

"Short shorts," low hanging pants, t-shirts with inappropriate language or images, or shirts which are tight or bare the midriff or cleavage are NOT permitted.

Registration

In order to attend the faith formation classes, the family must be registered in this Parish. Please contact the

the parish office for assistance if you have any questions regarding parish registration.

Registration for faith formation classes is available via the Google Form, available on the parish website. Hard copies are available upon request. Class registration is on a first-come-first-served basis. All paperwork (proof of Sacraments, registration forms) and registration fees must be submitted for the student to be officially admitted to the program. Scholarships are available.

Classes Age 3 – Grade 8

Children will have to be registered with the Religious Education Office (in the Parish Offices). A fee is charged at the time of registration, and scholarships are available. A copy of the child's baptismal certificate and the dates of any other Sacraments that the child has received should be submitted at the time of registration.

2-year Sacramental Preparation Classes

In order to receive the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist in Second Grade, the child must have been enrolled in either a Catholic school or FAITH FORMATION program for the First Grade. We conduct a two-year program that begins in the Fall of their First Grade and culminates in the Spring of their Second Grade.

In order to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in Grade Eight, the student must have been enrolled in Grade Seven the prior year in either a FAITH FORMATION program or a Catholic school.

Rite of Christian Initiation for Children "Special Sacraments" Classes

This two-year program is designed for children of catechetical age (7 years or older) who have not yet been baptized and who need to receive the Sacraments of Initiation, or for baptized children in grades 3-8 who have not yet received Confession/Penance and Eucharist. If you are planning on enrolling your children, there will be some necessary paperwork required. Children who have been baptized Catholic and "missed" receiving 1st Confession and 1st Communion should attend these classes.

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures

For the program year 2020-21, please refer to the separate document entitled "Religious Education Re-entry at Blessed Sacrament, 2020"

Names of adults (other than parents) who have permission to pick up your child(ren) may be added to the registration form.

Emergency Contact Information

Should you have an emergency during a faith formation session and need to contact the Director of Religious Education, please call the parish office at 703.998.6100. The office staff will then contact the DRE.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, Blessed Sacrament follows Alexandria City Public Schools for closures. Once the announcement is made, parish staff emails parents and the website is updated, in that order.

Safety Procedures

The Faith Formation program has established procedures for emergency scenarios. Drills for each scenario are rehearsed once a program year, at a minimum.

Fire: Every room has posted an evacuation route for exiting the building. Volunteer catechists lead the students out according to that route, in silence, and all classes proceed to the soccer field (no classes proceed to parking lots, as indicated on some posted routes).

Tornado: Every room has posted a designated area to which the adults and students are to proceed in the event of a tornado.

Bomb Threat: Volunteer catechists lead students out of building, following fire drill evacuation route, and proceed across Braddock Rd to the area behind the Scottish Rite Temple.

Lockdown: Volunteer catechists immediately close blinds for any windows, and ensure that students are as far away as possible from windows. Windows on doors are also covered. The door is locked from within the room, and all remain silent until the "all clear."

Photo/Video Consent

Parents are given the opportunity to opt out of their children's being photographed or videographed on the registration form.

Online Learning Consent

In order for children & youth to participate in virtual learning (either from the beginning of the program year or should the entire program revert to virtual), parents must give consent for them to do so by signing the form on the next page and submitting it to the parish office. Permission for each child in the family may be indicated on the same form.

CONSENT FOR ONLINE EDUCATION PLATFORMS

2020-2021 School Year

I _____ (parent/guardian), hereby give permission for _____ (child) to participate in the online educational platforms:

- Google Classroom/for Education (including Meet, Hangouts and GSuite)
- Zoom (Meeting)
- Go to Meeting
- Other: _____

used by the Diocese of Arlington/ _____ (Name of Parish/School) for the 2020-2021 school year.

- If my child uses the camera and microphone features on these platforms, my permission is implied and granted.
- I understand online educational meetings may be recorded per diocesan policy. If I do not wish for my child to be recorded, it is my responsibility to ensure the camera/microphone is turned off.
- I further understand that there is a potential of third-party interference (hacking), and therefore, I will be monitoring each session. I have spoken to my child about what to do should this occur.
- Students/parents/guardians should not take photos, screenshots, or record any video or audio, from these conference sessions.
- Should I choose to opt-out of online educational platforms, I must arrange with my parish faith formation leader to homeschool my child(ren).

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

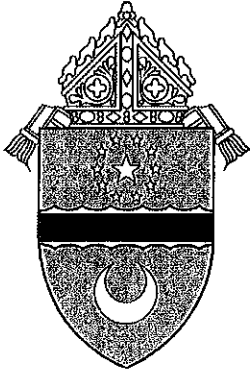
Home Address

City, State, Zip

Best Email Address for Parent/Guardian

Home Phone

Cell Phone



YOUTH SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING OPT-OUT FORM

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth* and the safe environment policies of the Diocese of Arlington require that all children/youth in our schools and religious education programs be given safe-environment training that is age-appropriate and in accord with Catholic moral principles. The Diocese of Arlington provides such training through the curriculum entitled **Formation in Christian Chastity** (for children in Grades 1-8) and either **Called to Protect for Youth**, or **Tricked: Inside the World of Teen Sex Trafficking** (for children in Grades 9-12). Information on the safe-environment programs for children is available on the diocesan webpage at: <http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/child-protection/youth-training-programs/>.

If you choose not to have your child participate in this training, we ask that you complete this form, sign it and submit the original document to your child's teacher or to the established program representative at your parish or school to be kept on file for one year. Please complete a copy of this form for each child you wish to opt-out.

Parish or School Name: _____

Child's Printed Name: _____

Child's Grade: _____

Parent's Printed Name: _____

By signing this official opt-out form, I decline to grant my approval for my child to attend the training described in this document. However, I understand that as the primary educator of my child, the Diocese of Arlington requests that I certify that I have provided appropriate safe environment training to my child within the home by returning this form either to my child's teacher or the established program representative as an official opt-out. I also acknowledge that the appropriate safe-environment training materials have been offered to me.

Parent's Signature

Date