
“Always be ready to give an explanation...for a reason for your **hope.**” (1 Pet 3:15)



Queen of Saints

Faith Formation Program Handbook

For

Kindergarten through 8th Grade

2025-2026

Table of Contents

Mission

Queen of Saints Faith Formation Board and Pastoral Staff

Guidelines and Procedures

Rules and Regulations

Discipline Policies

Victims of Sexual Abuse

Parents, by word and example, are the primary teacher of their children. At Baptism, parents agree to the responsibility of their child's Christian formation.

The Faith Formation volunteers and staff are here to assist parents in the spiritual formation and ongoing moral development of all children through a formal program of continuous faith sharing.

In our program, we seek to provide the catechesis and skills for each child to grow and mature in understanding, positive attitudes and faithful practice of the Catholic faith.

We strive to assist children in committing themselves to a personal relationship with God characterized by a sacramental life, a lifelong pattern of prayer, Christian service and growth in understanding the Catholic faith. We place our efforts in God's loving hands to achieve this process through the joint efforts of the parish staff, catechists, and parents of students.

Queen of Saints Faith Formation Commission

Immaculate Conception: Tammy Gibney

St. John: Janet Niebuhr

St. Michael: Karen Roe

St. Patrick: Kelsey Brecht

St. Paul: Rosemary Olson

Queen of Saints Pastoral Staff

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Queen of Saints Guidelines and Procedures

Traditional Program (Wednesdays - 6:15 pm – 7:30 pm)

Location: St. Paul Catholic Church, 306 3rd Ave, Newhall

Arrival:

- The meal before class begins at 6:00 pm.
- Students are to be in their classroom by 6:15 pm.
- Students are not to be in the classroom until the catechist arrives for supervision purposes.
- Students are to be respectful and courteous at all times.

We appreciate you respecting the drop off times.

Dismissal:

- Students are dismissed at 7:30 pm from the church proper.
- Students will be with their catechist and won't be allowed to leave until they see their parents.
- If the student is being picked up by someone other than their parent, a note stating who is picking them up needs to be on file.
- For safety and liability reasons, children are not allowed to wait outside.

We appreciate you respecting the dismissal procedures.

Calendar Changes

If the calendar is changed, the website calendar will be updated to reflect the change and/or a notice will be in the bulletin.

Teacher In-service Days

Faith Formation will be held on teacher in-service days. Class will only be cancelled due to inclement weather.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, cancellation of classes will be announced over local TV stations, KCRG, KWWL, and KGAN. Cancellations will also be posted on the Queen of Saints website (www.queenofsaints.com) and the phone tree will be implemented. If Benton Community Schools cancel for the day, Queen of Saints Faith Formation classes are automatically cancelled.

Summer Program (Second Week in June – 8:00 am – 3:30 pm)

Location: Immaculate Conception, 405 4th Ave, Van Horne

Arrival:

- Students are to be in the church proper by 8:00 am.
- Students are not to be in the classroom for supervision purposes.
- Students are to be respectful and courteous at all times.

We appreciate you respecting the drop off times.

Dismissal:

- Students are dismissed at 3:30 pm from the church proper.
- Students will be with their catechist and won't be allowed to leave until they see their parents.
- If the student is being picked up by someone other than their parent, a note stating who is picking them up needs to be on file.
- If the student(s) are walking, a note needs to be on file.
- For safety and liability reasons, children are not allowed to wait outside.

We appreciate you respecting the dismissal procedures.

Other Expectations from Students

Students are to respect all classroom, hallway, and building spaces.

- No touching of bulletin boards, dry-erase boards, displays, statues, and other objects.
- No running! Students are expected to walk up and down the stairs, the halls, and church aisles. Older students need to be aware of younger students who may be in front of them and push them.

Reconciliation and Eucharist

Traditionally, the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are received when the student is in second grade. In order to receive the Sacrament, the student must be baptized and must attend two consecutive years of Faith Formation. Kindergarten and First Graders who are not baptized must be baptized *BEFORE THE END OF FIRST GRADE* to stay in sequence for First Communion in second grade. If your child was baptized in another parish, documentation will be requested from the parish.

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist take place with all cluster students attending together. These classes are held on weekends either before or after mass.

Attendance

Attendance and participation in our Faith Formation program is essential

1. to develop a sense of belonging to the Queen of Saints communities,
2. for growth in our relationship to God,
3. and for an ongoing understanding of our Catholic faith.

Notification of an absence should be made to the Site Supervisor prior to the absence, no later than a half hour before the start of class.

Students are expected to attend every class unless of illness.

Unexcused absences are to be avoided. It is understood that emergencies do occur; however, absences due to school activities and sports are not excused. If your child should have more than 3 unexcused absences, it will be understood that a problem exists and will have to be evaluated by the parents with the Pastor before continuing in the program.

Special Needs

Parents are requested to list any health concerns of a student on the registration form. Parents are requested to list any special needs of a student with learning disabilities on the registration form. This information will be communicated to the appropriate catechist.

Communications

It will be the responsibility of students to deliver any communication in the form of notes or letters to their parents. It is the responsibility of the parent to ask the student if any notes were sent home with them. For a successful program, it is essential there be ongoing communication between the parents and the catechist. If there are problems, parents are to contact the catechists, the Site Supervisor and/or the Pastor.

Emergency Calls

Emergency phone calls can be made from the Faith Formation office.

Lost Articles

Lost and found articles will be kept in the Faith Formation office.

Church Attendance

Faith Formation students are required to attend weekly Mass. As a parent, you have been your child(ren)'s first catechist. Your attitude about church is the

attitude your child(ren) will develop. How you relate to God is how your child(ren) will relate to those around them.

Church Affiliation

Families need to be registered members at one of the Queen of Saints parishes: Immaculate Conception, St. John, St. Michael, St. Patrick, or St. Paul. The formation of each child is a responsibility shared by the parent/guardian and the cluster Faith Formation program.

Rules and Regulations

1. Food and gum are not allowed in the building or classroom, unless it has been authorized by the Site Supervisor. Birthday treats or other treats must be wrapped or in a plastic bag. They will be handed out at the classroom door and are not to be eaten until the student has left the building.
2. Students need to dress appropriately for class.
3. Students should respect one another's property and the building.
4. NO CELL PHONES are allowed in the classroom. If a student has it with them, it will be given to the catechist to hold until class is over.
5. If a field trip is planned, parents will need to give written permission by completing the Archdiocesan form, which is *different* than the waiver signed at the beginning of the year. This will be sent home with the student and will need to be returned to participate in the activity. Afterwards, the forms are kept on file at the cluster office.
6. **NOTICE:** Students will be dismissed at the appropriate time and will be taken to the designated area for pick up by their catechist. This will be done every class time. No student will be allowed to stand outside and wait. If they are to ride home with someone other than a parent, they must bring a permission slip with them and give it to the Site Supervisor. This person will then sign your child out. Your child's safety is of the utmost importance to the Queen of Saints cluster.

Discipline Policies

Every person is worthy of being treated with care and the respect fitting for one made in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, classroom behavior needs to be characterized by genuine Christian care, mutual respect and honesty. Disruptive behavior prevents learning for the whole class and can be frustrating for the Catechist and the other students. Discipline helps all students as it contributes to a climate of learning, loving, and living. It helps each student as it provides an environment to guide students to become a self-disciplined person. Each catechist in the classroom will clarify and establish classroom guidelines. Positive consequences encourage students to choose appropriate behavior. It is our mission to provide a safe environment where all have the opportunity to learn.

The Pastor, Site Supervisors, Catechists and Volunteers in the Queen of Saints cluster have the authority and responsibility to maintain good discipline. Catechists from all grade levels are responsible for all students and may correct any child's misbehavior. Within the classroom, normal discipline problems will be handled by the classroom catechist.

The disciplinary program is as follows:

1. The child will get a warning for behavior that is disrespectful towards their teacher or other students, or behavior that goes against the rules.
2. If the behavior continues, a second warning will be given and the child will be pulled from class to write a letter to their parents about what they were doing that violated the classroom rules.
3. If after the letter is written and the behavior continues, a third warning will be given. Their parent will need to stop and pick the letter up from the site coordinator and a parent will be required to attend class with the child the following time.
4. All three warnings can be given during the same class. The student would return with a clean slate the next class period.

Examples of discipline problems:

1. Talking continually while in class is in session after the student has been warned by the Catechist to be quiet.
2. Distracting other students so learning cannot take place.
3. Vandalism of property/building or the personal property of other students.
4. Open or persistent defiance of a catechist.

For more serious acts, the student will be removed immediately and parents and authorities will be contacted. These include but not limited to:

- If a student is under the influence of alcohol, drugs or a combination of substances.
- If a student is verbally or physically harassing or fighting.
- If a student is carrying weapons.
- If a student is stealing or damaging parish property.
- If a student is jeopardizing a person's safety.

Discipline Form

Name _____ Date _____

1. Why was I asked to leave the room?

2. What behavior on my part contributed to this?

3. I will do the following so that my time in Faith Formation will be more profitable:

Agreement:

Student

Catechist

Parent/Guardian

Site Supervisor

Help for Victims of Sexual Abuse

The Archdiocese of Dubuque has established a program of pastoral assistance to people who believe they or those in their care have been sexually abused as minors by clergy or other Church personnel. This assistance will include help in informing civil and Church authorities. Victim Assistance Coordinators are trained to facilitate access to appropriate professional mental health services, social service agencies, support groups and/or individuals who can provide spiritual care. Any individual desiring help from this program is invited to call 563-552-0280 or (866) 319-4636 to report an allegation or receive assistance. This program is part of the “Policy for the Protection of Minors”. Posters are hung in each of the churches with contact information.

<https://dbqarch.org/report-sexual-abuse>