

St. Michael the Archangel R.C. Church
St. Timothy Chapel
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FAITH FORMATION OFFICE

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Policies and Guidelines

Our Mission

To support the parents of the parish in helping their children grow in their understanding of our faith and deepen their relationship with our Lord, by encouraging them to participate actively in the celebration of the Eucharist and the life of the parish and to take seriously the study of Scripture and Catholic doctrine.

General Policies and Guidelines

The Faith Formation program begins in first grade. Children in grades 2-8 will be placed in the corresponding grade level at their school provided that they have been continuously enrolled in a Catholic school or a religious education program since first grade.

*Family Faith Formation: Parents and children receive monthly lessons in the parish following either the 9 am Mass or the 10:30 am Mass at St. Michael Church. Families work together at home for the remainder of the month. The program puts emphasis on the role of parents as the primary educators of their children in the faith. It is designed for grades 1-6.

*First Penance and First Communion have additional required preparations for the children and parents.

*Confirmation Preparation: Levels 1 and 2 (normally 7th and 8th grades) meet approximately two Sundays a month for lessons and Mass, as well as completing the Faith and Life online series at home. The Holy Mass is celebrated immediately after class. Confirmation is received in the fall of the following year (9th grade). The candidates have immediate preparation for the sacrament by attending three sessions in which they review key concepts of the faith and reflect on how to live the commitment they make to Christ and the Church in Confirmation.

Other requirements, such as Works of Mercy (Community Service), a saint report, a retreat, a reflection and a sponsor essay must be completed before receiving the sacrament.

Our Faith Formation program has a spiral approach in which learning builds upon previous years of experience and knowledge. Therefore, if a child has missed one or more years of religious instruction, the child may be placed one grade below their level or required to complete extra material based on an evaluation of the particular circumstances. Sacramental preparation is an exception and requires two years of preparation. All families in Faith Formation programs are expected to fulfill the Sunday and Holy Days Mass attendance obligation and to support parish endeavors.

Registration

Families must be registered members of the parish in order to attend St. Michael Faith Formation programs. New families must register in the rectory first and then register the children in person with the Faith Formation Office. Copies of sacramental certificates and, if applicable, a record of previous religious instruction are required at the time of registration.

Registration begins in April and closes on August 15th. A late fee will apply after a specified date on the registration form. Except for new families in the community, re-registrations will not be accepted after the first session of each program.

Tuition:	1 child - \$300
	2 children - \$400
	3 or more children - \$500
	Confirmation Fee - \$100
	First Communion Fee - \$75

Full payment is due at the time of registration. If full payment is not possible, please contact the Faith Formation Office. Financial assistance is available upon need, and information is kept confidential.

Sacramental Preparation

For the Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation, a consecutive two-year preparation is required. This policy is consistent with Diocesan directives. In order to receive the sacraments in a timely manner with their peers, all students must be registered parishioners and have been continually enrolled in a Catholic school or parish religious education program.

Children of registered parishioners in the second grade at Greenwich Catholic School will require additional preparation in the parish to receive the sacrament. Contact the office to register.

To enroll in Confirmation preparation, students must have completed religious education in a parish or Catholic school through grade 6. Those attending Catholic schools whose families are registered parishioners are exempt from attending 7th and 8th grades in the parish, but must register in 8th grade with the office, attend informational meetings, and complete the immediate preparation expectations for 9th grade.

Attendance Policy

Attendance in all programs is mandatory. This requirement reflects the fact that our Catholic faith has both a personal and communal dimension. The children are enriched by the instruction on essential concepts of the faith as well as the participation in activities and discussions with peers. The class setting serves as a complement to the home as the first school where the faith is lived and learned.

For a child who is absent or needs to leave class early please notify the office by phone or email in advance (whenever possible). For an absence to be excused, there must be a valid reason. Excessive absences may result in repeating the grade or doing make-up lessons and may result in the deferral of sacrament during sacramental preparation years.

*Family Faith Formation: Since sessions are held only once a month, attendance in this program is of the utmost importance and mandatory for BOTH children and at least one parent. Families are asked to make every effort to plan around the calendar in order to avoid

absences. Make-up sessions are provided but should be used for extraordinary circumstances, illness or and unforeseen event. If there are more than two unexcused absences or unfinished work, the children may not be promoted to the next level.

*Confirmation: Levels 1 and 2 – only two absences are allowed per semester. Immediate Preparation for Confirmation – attendance is mandatory for all three sessions. If studying away from home, alternative preparation will be provided. Contact the office.

Conflicts

We realize that ongoing personal conflicts or other conflicts due to sports and other extra-curricular activities may arise. Special accommodations may be arranged for each particular case. Parents must meet in person with the Faith Formation coordinator to make arrangements. Consistent with Diocesan guidelines, proper documentation (i.e. games/practice schedules, letter from coach) may be required.

Behavior

Children registered in the Faith Formation programs are expected to display the best and most respectful behavior that our Christian beliefs dictate. Our volunteer catechists generously give their time and talent to assist parents in the faith formation of the children. That alone calls for children to make a special effort to behave appropriately, including showing respect for others' property in the school and church buildings. Behavior and discipline problems will be handled by the office at the request of the catechist. Parents will be notified if the problem is not corrected by conversations with the child.

Homework

Homework will be assigned in the Faith Formation programs.

*Family Formation: Children must complete monthly activities and review sheets at home with their parents' help. To successfully complete each level, all finished worksheets must be turned in at the following monthly class meeting.

*Confirmation Preparation: Levels 1 and 2 students must complete all UNIT TESTS online at www.mycatholicfaithdelivered.com by the due dates specified. Timely completion of the online work is a

requirement to be promoted to the next level or to be eligible to continue with the Immediate Preparation for Confirmation

*Immediate Preparation: Completion of all requirements and homework is required before the date of the Confirmation.

Special Needs

Advise the office of any special needs your child might have so that we can make the necessary accommodations. The Diocese of Bridgeport offers curricula and support material for children with different learning styles and challenges. If your child is under a 504 plan or an IEP at school, consider sharing that information with the office to adapt lessons accordingly. Arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis. All information will be kept confidential.

Calendar and Cancellations

The yearly calendar and calendar changes will be posted on the website at www.stmichaelgreenwich.com and/or by email. Cancellations due to weather conditions or other unexpected circumstances will be announced on our website and/or by email.