



CORPUS CHRISTI

PARISH COMMUNITY

Corpus Christi Parish Faith Formation Grades PreK-6 Policies and Guidelines

Overview and purpose of Faith Formation

Parishioners with children in grades PreK-6 enroll in the Family Faith Formation program to immerse themselves in a well-rounded educational experience of a faith that is both learned and lived.

Family Faith Formation aims to accompany families and children along their faith journeys. The hope is that students and their families will be formed into articulate, Christ-like individuals, able to be active disciples in their future.

Faith Formation for grades PreK-6 has six required components:

1. Weekly family Mass participation (Saturday 5:00 PM, Sunday 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 or 6:00PM)
2. Faith Formation sessions (Sundays 8:00, 10:00 or Mondays 4:15)
3. Parent Meetings/Workshops
4. Family Events
5. At home family activities. Activities are assigned to each student depending on their grade to be completed as a family once each month.
6. Participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation for those in grade 3 and above (December 17, 2024 at 7:30PM or March 25, 2025 at 7:30PM)

Grades PreK – 6 Faith at Church

Weekly Mass attendance is an essential aspect of the Catholic faith. Our children need the Eucharist each week to grow spiritually. It is expected that families will attend mass on Saturday evening or Sunday throughout the year.

Traditional classes are held twice a month from September through April. Attendance is taken at each class and **students should not miss more than 3 classes each year**.

Students are instructed by parish volunteers in classes of approximately 15 students. Adult volunteers undergo a background check as well as Virtus training to ensure a safe environment.

Parents & Extended Family – *Faith at Church*

Parents are the primary teachers of faith for their children. Parent workshops are held to provide parents with the knowledge and tools to support Catholic living at home. Sessions are topical, supporting the basic tenets of our Catholic faith and provide the tools parents need to lead their families.

Families are often living together with older family members and students are sometimes connected by faith to adults outside their immediate family. We encourage all adults involved with helping to raise the student in their faith to attend and participate in the Parent Workshops. Younger/older siblings are always welcome.

Family Events

Family Events are scheduled at least monthly. Family events have included: Rosary, Gratitude-Service night, Ask a Priest, Family Teaching Mass, and Prayer Nights. These events are designed to help families fully participate in the life of the parish and Catholic Community.

Families are required to sign up for and attend a minimum of 7 family events (3 Prayer events, 2 Fellowship events, 2 Service events) throughout the year. Sign-ups take place via SignUp Genius posted on the parish website.

Family Home Activities – *Faith at Home*

Each student, depending on the grade level will have a monthly assignment to be completed with participation from the entire family. These will be sent home through the Flocknote email system at the time of the first class of the month. They should be returned at the time of the first class of the next month. Activities will include prayer, and at times a video found on Formed.org (free to all Corpus Christi parishioners) along with a written or other creative activity. They will be displayed in the hallway where students enter/exit the building to the main parking lot.

Sacrament Preparation for 1st Reconciliation & 1st Communion

Grades 1 and 2 are a dedicated time of preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. The Diocese of Paterson requires that children prepare for these Sacraments for a period of two years.

Celebrating the Sacrament of Eucharist for the first time should be an integral part of the ongoing religious experience of a child. Receiving First Communion further initiates a child into the life of the Christian community.

Sacrament Preparation continued:

In addition to class attendance the requirements for receipt of the sacraments include:
Participation in the Teaching Mass and Ask a Priest & Deacon during 1st & 2nd grade
(held in October)

Completion at home of the supplemental books “Reconciliation” and “Eucharist”
during 2nd grade

Retreat in March of 2nd grade (Parents are required to attend)

Participation in May Crowning following 1st Communion

Participation in Corpus Christi Feast Day following 1st Communion

FAQs

What are the Faith Formation classes all about?

Faith Formation classes will cover basic Catholic beliefs and practices. All grade levels use the Sadlier “Christ In Us” program which has been approved by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Diocese of Paterson.

Each class will learn the same topic at a level appropriate for the age of the student. Regardless of the grade, classes will always incorporate prayer, liturgical seasons, Saints, Catholic traditions and faith sharing discussions.

Do we have to attend Mass when there’s no class or an event?

Yes. Participating in Mass weekly is essential for Catholics. At Mass we are fed spiritually by the Eucharist, by the Word and by the community. Keeping the sabbath Holy is a vital part of being a disciple. Mass times are arranged for the convenience of the parishioners and their schedules. We grow in living out our faith by participating in Mass, living a life of mercy and justice, sharing in God’s love and by watching others practice their faith.

What if my child missed first grade? Can they still make Communion in grade 2 with their classmates?

Communion preparation in the Diocese of Paterson is a two-year process. At Corpus Christi, this typically takes place during the first and second grade. If your child did not attend faith formation in grade 1, they should enroll for the grade they will be in beginning in the upcoming September. Sacraments will be received 2 years from that time. (i.e. if they are coming into the 1st year of preparation in 2nd grade, communion will be in May of 3rd grade. If they come in during 4th grade, communion will be in May of 5th grade, etc.)

Why Is participation in the Family Faith Formation program required after First Communion?

Communion is just ONE of the many special moments in the life of a Catholic. Continuing catechesis beyond this time helps a child better grow in and live out their faith on a level that is appropriate for their age and grade level. Learning about our faith isn't a one- or two-year process, but rather a lifelong journey.

Parents wouldn't take a student out of math class after 2nd grade only to return them in 7th grade and expect them to be able to understand higher math. We can't expect children to understand or develop a relationship with God if they aren't consistently participating in Faith Formation.

Can my child study remotely or at home?

Home study is not an option at Corpus Christi. Being part of the parish community is vital to the Catholic faith. This is especially true for children, who need to grow in their faith journeys with both their family, as well as their peers in order to see value in and a connection to their faith later in life.

How do I sign up for family events? How many are required?

Families can sign up for Family Events on the parish website, CorpusChristi.org using the tab Faith Formation and then "Family Event Sign Up". This will link you to the events that are coordinated by the Minister of Family Faith Formation. Families will sign in at the event. **Seven events are required: 3 Prayer, 2 Service and 2 Fellowship.**

How can I help or volunteer?

1. Each class needs a Lead Catechist and an Assistant. Lead Catechists need to be adults who have been Confirmed and attend mass regularly. Assistants can be High School aged, attend mass with their family regularly and preparing for or received the sacrament of Confirmation.
2. Catechists are always needed. Each class needs at least one catechist. Training is provided at various meetings. New volunteers working with children need to attend a VIRTUS training session, as well as complete a background check.
3. Each Family event needs 3-5 adults to help plan and coordinate the event with the Minister of Family Faith Formation. Parents can volunteer for one event, or as many as you'd like.
4. Substitute Catechists and assistants are always needed.

How many classes can my child miss?

No more than 3.

Can my child make up a class during another session?

Yes. Please email the Minister of Family Faith Formation to coordinate this at least 2 days prior to the class to be made-up or switched. **Do not drop your child at an alternate time without scheduling the make-up ahead of time.** Many classes are filled to capacity and a seat may not be available.

How is pick up and drop off managed for classes?

Children can walk to their classes independently **once they've learned where their classroom is.** They use the main 1st floor hallway of the Gingham Giraffe Preschool and proceed up the stairs at the end of the hall if their classroom is upstairs. The stairwell at the gym entrance is closed for drop off for security reasons. Students are asked to wait in the hall until their teacher arrives.

Dismissal takes place outside of the main gym doors where **students and teachers wait until a parent or guardian has exited their car and entered the safe coned area to pick up their child.** Children will not be permitted to walk to a parked car unattended.

When are sign-ups for First Communion Masses?

Sign-ups for Communion Masses will take place in January. First Communion Masses are Mother's Day weekend and the following weekend. Mass times are 10:00 am and 12:00 noon.

When is registration?

Registration is on-line. Early registration is from the beginning of February through the last class at the end of April. Late registration is from the end April until August 15. Registration closes on August 16.

What if my family is unable to cover the cost of registration?

No family should ever go without faith formation because of cost, all are welcome. Please reach out to Fr. Kevin at FrKevin@CorpusChristi.org if you are in need of financial assistance for faith formation for your children.