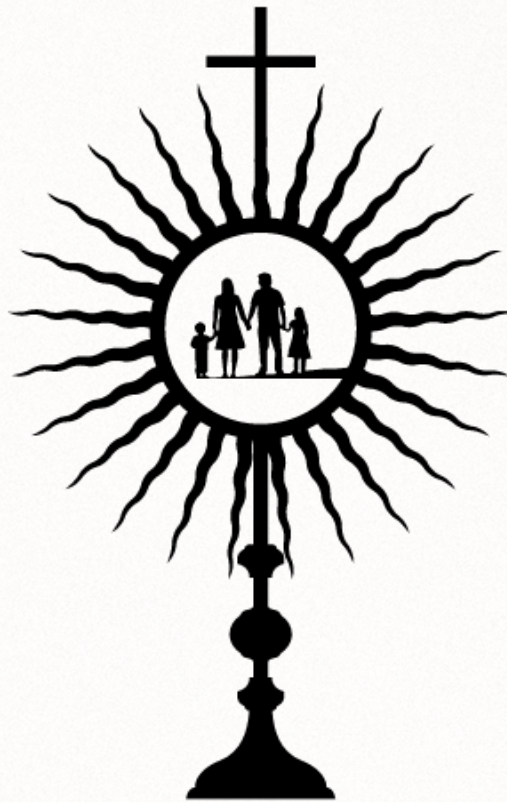


FAMILY FAITH FORMATION HANDBOOK

Practice Culture Education



Helping families embrace Catholic practice, culture, and education in order to foster a personal relationship with Jesus and a life of joy and peace.

Welcome

Hello, Parents and Family!

Welcome to your reference guide for Family Faith Formation! Please refer to this guide throughout the year for questions about the structure of the program, monthly expectations, and what to do if you miss a meeting.

St. John Neumann's Family Faith Formation program is based on three pillars: Catholic practice, culture, and education. By actively engaging in the sacramental and prayer life of the Church (practice), immersing your family in the rich traditions and rhythms of Catholic living (culture), and growing in knowledge and understanding of the Faith (education), you are helping to shape a home where faith is lived and loved. Your participation in all three pillars not only enriches your family's journey through the program but also plays a vital role in leading your child into a lasting and personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Catholic practice refers to events that focus on meeting the person of Jesus in a Catholic setting. For example, when a person is committed to regularly attending Mass, Adoration, and the Sacrament of Penance, it usually indicates that this person is a practicing Catholic.

Catholic culture is how a person incorporates and personalizes Catholic practice into his everyday life. For example, my wife Steph and I pray the Rosary each day, but we save the fifth decade to pray together at night. This is an example of how our family took the Catholic practice of the Rosary and made it something personal in our lives.

Catholic education is the way we learn about Jesus and our Catholic Faith. Catholic education can happen via classroom and at-home lessons but also in a variety of ways, such as reading spiritual books, attending retreats, listening to podcasts, and participating in Bible studies. As we learn more about Jesus and our Faith, we desire to know more. This knowledge brings us to a deeper experience of Jesus in our Catholic practice and culture.

I hope through the course of this year, you can see your family grow in these three areas, and in doing so, find a deeper relationship with Jesus and an increase of joy and peace.

Nate Gulya

Director of Faith Formation



The Gulya Family



The Houser Family

Family Faith Formation Program Outline

Participation in the Family Faith Formation program is measured by the following standards:

- Completion of 2 Catholic practice activities per month
- Completion of 2 Catholic culture activities per month
- Completion of 3 Catholic education activities per month

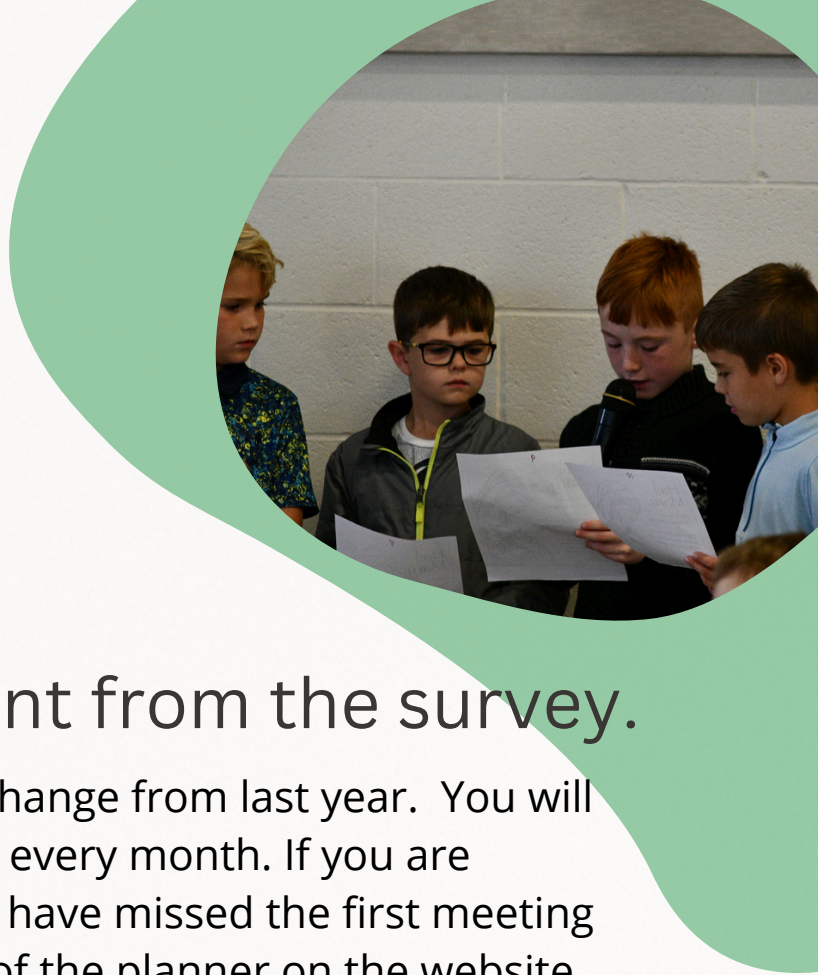
In-Person and At-Home Participation (For all grade levels.)

In-Person Routine:

- RSVP for each Peer and Family meeting via the link sent to you by email and text.
- Attend the Peer meeting (which counts as 1 education activity).
 - At this meeting, you will be given a monthly planner. Take the planner home to track the activities you complete.
- Complete 2 practice, 2 culture, and 1 education activity at home from your planner.
- Attend the Family meeting (which also counts as 1 education activity).
- At the end of each month, complete and submit a digital survey, which will be emailed to you and also available on the website.

At-Home Routine:

- RSVP “no, at-home” for each Peer and Family meeting.
- Complete 2 Practice, 2 culture, and 3 education activities of your choice.
- At the end of the month, complete and submit a digital survey, which will be emailed to you and also available on the website.



The planner is different from the survey.

If you have been with us, this is a change from last year. You will still receive planners in your folder every month. If you are registered as an at-home family or have missed the first meeting of the month, you can find a copy of the planner on the website. The planner is a tool to guide you through your activities for the month and keep track of the activities completed.

At the end of the month, you will complete and submit a digital survey indicating which activities you completed that month. The digital survey will be sent to you each month via email and will also be accessible on the website. This means no more paper surveys!

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

THE BOOKS AND PUBLISHERS



PRE-K - 1ST GRADE

Walking with Jesus is a faith formation series from Sophia Institute Press designed to help young children develop a personal relationship with Jesus through Scripture, prayer, and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Each lesson emphasizes encountering Jesus, forming virtuous habits, and growing in love for God and neighbor.



GRADES 3-6

A Family of Faith runs from September through April. Parents are given a detailed picture of authentic and vibrant Catholic family life, the tools to implement this life in their home, and age appropriate readings, games, crafts, and other activities to help them deepen among their children a love for Christ and His Church.



2ND GRADE

Renewed: Your Journey to First Reconciliation offers children and their parents an engaging, interactive way to grow in their understanding of God's love and mercy through fun activities, live-action videos, and an attractive and approachable workbook. This book is published by Ascension Press.



2ND GRADE

Received helps children understand and appreciate the incredible gift we're offered in the Eucharist through engaging high-quality videos, fun and interesting activities, and much more. Children and their parents will come away with a deeper love and gratitude for this transformative sacrament.



GRADES 7-8

Chosen: Your Journey to Confirmation has been used by thousands of parishes to present the Catholic Faith to teens as they prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The student workbook is seamlessly integrated with videos and includes fill-in-the-blank questions, prayers, vocabulary words, stories of saints, a "Challenge of the Week," and more.

The aforementioned books are one of many tools used by the Faith Formation Office to create a well-rounded, unique program that integrates educational, practical, and cultural aspects of Catholic life.



Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is the difference between Faith Formation, Family Faith Formation, and A Family of Faith?**

Faith Formation is a term that refers to all the programs from the SJN Faith Formation office. This includes Pre-K through 8th Grade and sacrament preparation.

Family Faith Formation refers to the religious education program encompassing grades Pre-K through 6th.

A Family of Faith is the textbook (Sophia Press) used by Family Faith Formation students in grades 3 through 6.

- **What books are the second graders using?**

Students preparing for First Confession and First Holy Communion use the books *Renewed and Received* (Ascension).

- **Why do we meet only twice a month?**

Family Faith Formation meets twice a month for two main reasons:

1) To Support Family Life and Flexibility: Meeting twice a month allows families the time and space to engage more fully in the at-home portion of the program. This rhythm helps faith become a natural part of family life rather than another weekly obligation.

2) To Honor the Sabbath: Sunday is meant to be a day of rest, worship, and renewal. In a busy world filled with constant demands, our twice-a-month schedule allows families to slow down, pray together, and truly experience Sunday as a sacred and restful day.

- **Why do parents have to attend meetings and do at-home lessons with their children?**

The mission of Family Faith Formation is to help build strong Catholic families where children come to know the joy of following Jesus and the truth of the Catholic Faith, most powerfully through the witness and example of their parents.

Recognizing that parents are the first and most important educators of their children in the Faith, the Faith Formation Office is here to support and guide families in this sacred responsibility. We do this through a variety of resources, including engaging video series, small-group discussions, and community-based peer meetings, which offer parents opportunities to grow in their own faith. Children receive formal instruction during monthly sessions with catechists, as well as during monthly family meetings where the entire community comes together to learn, pray, and practice the Faith. A vital component of the program is the at-home formation led by parents, which honors the natural way children learn—through the everyday life and example of those closest to them. Parental involvement is not only encouraged; it is essential. When parents actively pass on the Faith, they help their children build personal relationships with Jesus and form a foundation that leads to a lifelong, faithful Catholic life.

- **How much time should the at-home activities take each month?**

The practice and culture activities vary as to how much time they take; however, they tend to be activities that can be incorporated into a family's schedule with minimal effort (e.g., bedtime prayers, Sunday Mass, etc.). The educational activities usually average 20 minutes, but will vary depending on your child.

Code of Conduct

For everyone to enjoy the Family Faith Formation experience, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Arrive early to enjoy coffee, bagels, donuts, and fellowship. Please be sure children have a bathroom break at home or before they are dismissed to their classrooms. Requests to use the bathroom during class sessions are very distracting to everyone.
- Children are expected to listen and follow the instructions of their catechists. If a child is presenting with distracting or undesirable behavior, they will receive two warnings from the catechist. Upon a third instance, the child will be returned to their parent, and the family will be required to make up the lesson at home.
- Everyone participating should respect and take care of school property. This includes removing trash, refraining from touching items inside classroom desks, and keeping classrooms neat and clean.