CATECHIST INFORMATION

CATECHIST ORIENTATION VIDEOS

GENERAL ORIENTATION (3:43)

ELEMENTARY (GRADES 1-5) ORIENTATION (6:37)

MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8) ORIENTATION (4:34)

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Attendance – Take attendance at the beginning of each session. Keep attendance sheet up-to-date. Return attendance charts to your mailbox after each session.
Be on time – Be in your assigned room at least fifteen (15) minutes before the session begins to set up the learning environment and be ready to greet learners as they arrive. Children should never be in a room unsupervised.

Bulletin boards in each room are marked by grade and day for early childhood and elementary sessions. If you need additional bulletin board space, you may hang things from the ceiling using yarn and paper clips. Do not use tape on the walls, whiteboards, or windows; you may use poster putty on the walls. You may also use the hallway tack strip outside your room.

Cabinets – Shelf space will be assigned to each catechist and for general use in each room. Be mindful of these spaces and maintain cleanliness and organization out of respect for all who share these cabinets.

Cancellation – Faith formation sessions are automatically cancelled when Forest Hills Public Schools cancel classes due to weather conditions. If bad weather starts just prior to session times, the staff will contact the catechists, who will then attempt to contact the parents of their learners. Cancellations will be broadcast over local radio and television stations, including WOOD-AM (1300), WOOD-FM (105.7), WOOD TV-8, WZZM TV-13. Cancellations will also be listed online on the parish website. If in doubt, please contact the Faith Formation Office.

Candles & fire code – For everyone’s safety, non-wick battery-operated candles are in rooms. Lighted candles may not be used in the rooms.

Communication with parents is encouraged via email, phone, and written letters and notes. Communication with parents should be shared with the appropriate Faith Formation Pastoral Associate.

- Faith Formation News Sample

Copies of Handouts – Any requests for typing or duplication of lesson handouts should be given to the Faith Formation Assistants at least one week in advance of the date they are needed. Complete a request form (available in the Catechist’s Corner) and place it in the Request Form Mailbox. You may opt to email your request to FaithFormation@StRobertChurch.org; include the grade level, number of the blackline master, and number of copies needed. (Example: Grade 2, BLM#4, 20 copies). All finished resources will be placed in your mailbox. The copy machine and the paper in the Faith Formation Office are not to be used by catechists. Absolutely no children may use the copy machine.

Drop Off Sign-in & Dismissal Sign-out – The standard procedure for dropping off and picking up children is for parents or other authorized adults to escort their children to and pick up their children from their rooms. Parents or other authorized adults must come into the building, go to their children’s rooms, and initial the sign-in/sign-out sheet when dropping off and picking up their children.

Field trips – With the exception of curriculum-based field trips, which are arranged by the Faith Formation Pastoral Associates, no field trips are allowed. In the case of the field trips arranged by the Pastoral Associates, each learner must submit a signed consent form to participate, and drivers must complete an insurance information form.

Food & Snacks – No food or snacks will be allowed in the rooms. Parents are responsible for ensuring their children eat before entering the learning space. (There may be exceptions for program-related activities, as approved by the Faith Formation Pastoral Associates.)

Guest speakers – Other than our pastor or parish staff members, requests for guest speakers must be brought to the attention of the Faith Formation Pastoral Associate before contacting the speaker.

Learner conduct – Learners are expected to be respectful of catechists, fellow learners, and church property. Restitution for any damage incurred by a learner is the responsibility of the learner and/or his/her parents/guardians. If a learner is disrespectful to the catechist or fellow learners or damages church property, the following steps will be taken:
The catechist will give the learner a warning.
If a second correction is needed during the same class session, the learner is sent to the office to complete an assigned activity.
The learner will complete a Responsible Action Form and give this to the staff person in charge. A copy of the form may be sent home to parents/guardians. The original will be kept in Faith Formation office files.
If a learner is sent to the office for a second time during a six-week period, parents/guardians will be asked to come in for a consultation with the staff.

Learning Areas – Catechists may setup the tables and chairs in their rooms according to their wishes. At the end of sessions, there is no need to move tables and chairs. The next catechist to use the room may change the configuration, accordingly.
- Do not take tables and chairs from other rooms.
- Do not drag tables or chairs across the floor.
- Do not stand or sit on or under tables.
- Close windows before you leave.
- At the end of each session, you are responsible for leaving the room clean and organized.
  - When using glue or other messy craft supplies, cover the tables with newspaper or cloths, which are located on the top shelf in each room.
  - Clean off surfaces at the end of each session. (Have the learners clean off the tables.)
  - Cleaning supplies are in a plastic tub on the top shelf of the tall cabinet in each room.
  - Vacuums are available. Check with faith formation staff for a vacuum.
  - After each session, empty your room’s waste basket into the yellow trash container in the hallway.
  - Erase/wipe off whiteboards at the end of each session.

Mailboxes are located in the Faith Formation Office. Please check your mailbox before sessions begin. Read memos and handouts for important information, accordingly.

Name badges are provided for catechists and are to be worn every time you facilitate. Your name badge will be in your mailbox.

Reference materials may be found in the Catechist’s Corner in the Parish Library. Please complete the self-checkout process. Return materials to the Catechist’s Corner box provided in a timely manner so that all catechists have access to the resources.

Restrooms – Learners are encouraged to use the restrooms before sessions begin. If a learner needs to use the restroom during session time, allow only one learner to leave the room at a time. Learners should use the restrooms in the Faith Formation Wing. The doors to those restrooms will be left open at all times.

Moveable Walls – Rooms 102/104 and 204/206 have moveable walls separating them. Never open or close the wall when learners are present. If the wall needs to be opened or closed, notify a parish staff member.

Safety – In the event of a TORNADO, students will be escorted to the inner hallway and classrooms and be seated facing the wall with a book over their necks and heads. Tornado drills will be held at the beginning of the year.

In the event of a FIRE, students will be escorted out the nearest exit to the back of the parking lot where attendance will be taken. Parents will meet us at the back of the parking lot and must sign out their children with the catechist before taking their children away. Fire drills will be held during at the beginning of the year.

If a student is injured, appropriate FIRST AID will be performed. In the case of a minor injury, faith formation staff will perform basic first aid, and parents will be notified as soon as possible. In the case of an injury requiring professional medical attention, faith formation staff will contact 911 for emergency treatment and will contact the students’ parents or the designated emergency contact. Medical Treatment Release is obtained through the registration process.
Substitutes – If you are unable to teach your session because of illness or other reason, contact a substitute catechist for the substitute list and inform the appropriate Faith Formation Pastoral Associate as soon as possible. Substitute lists will be provided at the beginning of the year.

Supplies – General – If any general room supplies in the cabinets are running low, notify the Faith Formation staff.

Supplies – Craft & Bulletin Board, Vacuums – Resource Room 2 is located on the first floor of the Faith Formation Wing (next to the Parish Library) and holds craft and bulletin board supplies and vacuums. Please make every effort to keep this room clean and organized by putting away supplies in the appropriate areas.

Whiteboards – Erase any writing, drawing, or marks off the whiteboards at the end of each session. Whiteboards retain colors if they are not wiped off after each use.

- Use only EXPO markers on whiteboards.
- Limit usage to class work.
- Return markers and erasers to the holder on the top of the whiteboard.
- Place markers upside down in the storage container.