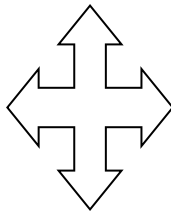


St. John the Evangelist  
Center Moriches, NY 11934

Office of Faith Formation

Rev. John Sureau, Pastor  
Ms. Michelle Pirraglia, Director



**Parent Handbook  
2018-19**

**Faith Formation Office Hours**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday  
11AM-12Noon; 1PM-4:30PM (RED BARN)

Phone: (631) 878-0009, ext. 5  
E-mail: [mpirraglia@sjecm.org](mailto:mpirraglia@sjecm.org) | [faithformation@sjecm.org](mailto:faithformation@sjecm.org)

Dear Parents/Guardians:

A warm welcome to you, our families in Faith Formation/Religion Education. It is truly a joy to have you as members of our community of faith. It is our mission to partner with you as we grow in faith together by participating in sessions, activities and events throughout the year. We believe our purpose is to provide a loving and compassionate environment for the whole community, to learn about our faith and to be transformed into the life of Christ Jesus. We believe this journey is shaped by God as we together worship, study, and serve one another. May we experience the peace and joy of the Spirit of God as we seek to renew our lives each and every day. It is our hope that this handbook will provide you with all necessary information that you will need throughout the year. If we can help you in any way, please feel free to call us at the Religious Education Office at (631)878-0009, ext. 5 or visit us during our office hours: Monday-Thursday, 11AM-4:30PM (*Closed from 12Noon-1:00PM*).



May God bless you.

*Michelle Pirraglia*  
*Director of Faith Formation*

# **The Responsibility of the Family**

*“In what might be regarded as the domestic church, the parents, by word and example are the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children. They must foster the vocation which is proper to each child, and this with special care if it be to religion.”*

Dogmatic Constitution of the Church (*Lumen Gentium*)

Chapter II, The People of God, #11

## **First Level**

Level I invites children entering their first formal year of formation to have a more active involvement and experience with God. The children discover how much God loves and cares for them as His special followers.

## **Second Level**

Our two-year Sacrament Preparation Program for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion provides ways to learn, celebrate, share and live out our Catholic Faith. We connect children, family and the whole church community with rich and diverse prayer experiences, rituals, and celebrations.

## **Levels: 3, 4, 5 & 6**

These levels present the truths of the Catholic faith found in Sacred Scripture and Tradition in accordance with the teaching of the Church. The content of faith is presented in varied ways that are age appropriate and culturally sensitive. Lessons include family and whole community components.

## **Levels 7 & 8**

Sacramental catechesis for Confirmation is a two-year process of conversion. The focus of the curriculum includes preparation of our young adults to become fully initiated into the Church. Level 7 examines the life and teachings of Jesus as the foundation of our faith. Level 8 examines issues of Catholic living such as morality, vocations, service, and participation in a Confirmation retreat given by our Director of Youth Ministry our Youth Ministry Core Team.

## **Students with Special Needs**

All children, regardless of their ability level, are invited to participate in our Religion Education Program. Every effort will be made to work with parents to provide the best possible faith formation experience for their children. Please call Religion Ed Office to discuss any special accommodations your child may need to participate in our program. If you are interested in providing support or being trained as a special assistant volunteer to help in our Special Needs Program, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **RCIC-Older Children in need of Baptism**

*Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC)*

This rite is for children who are age 7 and older who have never been Baptized or who are coming from another faith. All are welcomed into our Church through the two-year participation in an adapted form of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Please call the Office of Faith Formation (878-4141) and make an appointment to speak with Michelle Pirraglia.

## **CLASS ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

### **Levels 1 & 2:**

Saturdays—8:30AM-9:30AM; 10AM-11AM

### **Levels 3-6:**

Monday & Tuesday—4:45-5:45PM , 6PM-7PM

### **Level 7:**

Monday—6PM-7PM; 7:15PM-8:15PM

### **Level 8:**

Tuesday—6PM-7PM; 7:15PM-8:15PM

Parents are asked to sign their children in/out at the classrooms. The building doors will be locked 15 minutes after the session begins. No adult will be allowed to enter the School without the permission of a staff member or hall monitor. No child will be dismissed without a parent or guardian. Please note, only service animals are permitted in the building.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL/LATE ARRIVAL**

Because early dismissal can be disruptive to the class, please try to limit this action. Any early dismissal/late arrival of 15 minutes or more will be considered 1/2 an absence. **Students in classes are only allowed three absences during the academic year.** If you anticipate early dismissal for your child, we ask that you please give a note to the teacher at the beginning of class. When you come to pick them up, please sign them out from the Nurse's office. A staff member will bring the student to you in the Nurse's office. If there are special family circumstances that we should be aware of, please call Michelle at the Faith Formation Office.

## **ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES**

We ask that parents/guardians exercise their roles as primary educators of their children and facilitate the regular attendance of their children at Religious Ed classes and **most especially fulfilling our Sunday obligation to attend Mass.** A note from the parents is required when a child is absent. Five or more absences will result in the student being assigned to home study (note above how early dismissal/late arrival count toward absences). Should your child become ill during class, parents or the emergency contact person noted on the registration form will be notified.

## **BULLETIN, WEBSITE, FACEBOOK, “REMIND” App...**

The Church Bulletin and Website are our official means of communication. It is the parents’ responsibility to check these each week for information regarding upcoming Religious Education events, celebrations, and parent information meetings. The bulletin is available at the doors of the Church after all the Masses. The parish website, [sjecm.org](http://sjecm.org), has a link to Faith Formation. We also send out most of our reminders via email, so please be sure to check your email and make sure our office has yours on file. Finally, join us on the “REMIND” App by sending the text message “@sjefaiht” to “81010.” Please also follow us on Facebook (StJohn FaithFormation).

## **AFTER OFFICE HOURS**

If the office/Barn is closed and you wish to leave something with us, you may drop off tests, registration fees, etc. to the Rectory (878-0009) where we have a mail box. Our mailbox is checked each morning before we open.

## **CATECHIST AND VIRTUS TRAINING**

Our catechists are volunteers who share their faith with the children of our parish as they assist our parents in their role as their child’s primary teachers.

- Background check
- **Virtus: Protecting God’s Children Abuse Awareness Course and Online Training.** All staff members and catechists are required to attend this program to familiarize themselves in detecting possible sexual misconduct. St. John the Evangelist will follow diocesan policies and state laws in handling these matters.
- Commitment of time to pray, prepare and teach each lesson.

Catechists are also encouraged to utilize the Profession Page on the Diocesan website ([drvc-faith.org](http://drvc-faith.org)) for information regarding opportunities to further their education through the following:

- *Virtual Learning Link* launched through a partnership between the Diocese of Rockville Centre and the University of Dayton.
- Basic and Advanced Certificates offered here and at other parishes throughout the Diocese.

We are always in need of catechists, classroom assistants and hall monitors. If you feel you are being called to help spread the love of Jesus, please call the office to volunteer to help in this very rewarding ministry.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

In the event that class will be cancelled for inclement weather, please tune into NEWS12 TV or [news12.com](http://news12.com). Notifications will also be sent out via email, so please be sure our office has your correct email address. Check with NEWS12 and your email for Saturday cancellations. We will also send out text notifications of cancellations for those who have signed up for the “REMIND” App.

## CODE OF CONDUCT/DRESS CODE

Students are expected to behave in a proper and courteous Christian manner at all times by showing respect and being cooperative with staff members, catechists, hall monitors and other students. They are expected to:

- Show respect for the rights, property and safety of themselves and others.
- Express themselves with socially acceptable language and gestures.
- Dress appropriately in a Christian manner.

Keeping in mind that students visit the Church during class time, we request parents make sure that their children are dressed appropriately. A reminder: boys are expected to remove their hats when entering the Church.

Our classes are a privilege, not an entitlement. When a student repeatedly demonstrates that she/he is unable to adhere to our Code of Conduct, the Director of Faith Formation will notify the student's parent/guardian to discuss discipline issues and alternative forms of instruction or, in severe cases, dismissal from the program.

We have a firm policy against harassment. As followers of Jesus we hold each person to be a child of God, deserving of respect and kindness. If any such harassment occurs, the Director of Faith Formation will notify the parent/guardian to discuss measures to prevent the occurrence from happening in the future.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All students' records and personal information will be held strictly confidential. Those with access to your child's records will be parents/guardians, the Faith Formation staff members and your child's catechist, unless you otherwise indicate.

## UPDATING CONTACT INFORMATION

Please call the Religious Ed Office if the information that you supplied on your child's registration form changes. This information also includes changes of address, custody arrangements, food allergies, and any medications needed.

## HOME STUDY

Home Study currently is permitted for Levels 4-8 of our program, as long as our office's guidelines are followed. Home Study does not exempt families from parent meetings, grade level services, etc. Students must be registered in our program and use the materials and textbooks we provide. The workbook unit tests are to be completed and returned **by the assigned deadlines** to satisfy the diocesan requirement of proof that the learning took place. **Students who do not complete the work within the deadlines must repeat the level in the next academic year.**

## MINISTRIES FOR CHILDREN

We invite the youth of our parish to be vital and productive members of our community. The following ministries welcome our youth:

- Altar Servers & Lectors (grades 4 and up)
- Children's Choir (all ages) 6
- Youth Ministry (Grades 9-12)

## PARENT MEETINGS

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to read all the information that is sent home with the students and to attend **mandatory**, scheduled parent information meetings. The times and dates of these events are published in the Church Bulletin and the Website. This vision is rooted in the Catholic understanding of what it means to be a community of faith.

## REGISTRATION TIMEFRAME: JUNE-AUGUST 31

St. John's Faith Formation Program welcomes all children whose parents are registered members of the parish. New student registration takes place during the summer (beginning date varies each year) and ends August 31. The dates/times are printed in the Church Bulletin and listed on our website.

- To register your child for the first time, you will need to bring in your child's original baptismal certificate if he/she was not Baptized at St. John's.
- If there are special family circumstances such as custody agreements, orders of protection, adoption, etc., those legal documents need to be presented at the time of registration.
- Students transferring from another Religious Ed program or Catholic School must also provide us with a Letter of Transfer indicating what level of religious education has been completed and which Sacraments have been received.
- Class placement for Levels 1 into 2 and Level 6 into 7 each have a second process to determine the following year's placement. This takes place at the end of the current year. Levels 2-5, and 8 move up on the original day/time from the previous year.
- The registration fee is collected during registration. The fee covers the cost of books and materials, among other expenses. Families of children receiving Sacraments are asked to pay an additional offering which covers the costs of the additional events associated with receiving these particular Sacraments. No child will ever be denied religious instruction due to financial concerns. If you are unable to pay the registration fee in full, we are willing to work with you find other options.

### Registration Fee (2018-19)\*:

- 1 child - \$110
- 2 children - \$125
- 3 or more children - \$140
- Sacrament Offerings (collected separately in the Spring):  
    First Communion \$50      Confirmation \$85

*\*Registration fees paid after August 31 are subject to a late charge of \$10 per child. Registration fees and Sacrament offerings are subject to change each year based on financial need.*

## SOCIAL MEDIA & PICTURES

St. John's Faith Formation shares images of our program's many events, classes and other activities with the parish through our bulletin, Facebook page and other Social Media outlets. If you do not wish for your child's image to be placed in these outlets, please contact the office in writing.

## *A Parent's Prayer*

*Heavenly Father, make me a better parent.  
Help me to understand my children,  
to listen patiently to what they say,  
and to answer all their questions  
wisely and kindly.  
Keep me from making their decisions so that  
they can learn to solve problems.  
Keep me from interfering so that they can  
develop responsibility.  
Help me to have the courage to refuse giving  
in to what will harm them.  
Help me to appreciate my children as they  
are, no as I would have them be.  
When I grow discouraged,  
remind me that my child is also Your child.  
Abide with us always.  
Shelter us in Your care.  
Surround us with Your goodness  
and enfold us in Your love.*

*Amen*

