

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan
Faith Formation – Religious Education
Fall 2020

Preparedness Plan Administrator – Mary Hagar (763-658-4319, ext. 31)

The purpose of this plan is to allow St. Mary's Parish to engage in the important mission of faith formation and sacramental preparation while mitigating the risk of disease exposure, promoting healthy behaviors and maintaining sanitized facilities and operations. Every effort was made to implement as closely as possible the "Guidelines for Faith Formation Events and Activities" published by the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. Of the three models suggested by the "Guidelines", St. Mary's has chosen the hybrid approach, combining both virtual and in person elements of faith formation. Our "Preparedness Plan" assumes that model though the parish is aware that movement to a virtual/online/remote model may become necessary based on current circumstances.

☆ Family Responsibilities ☆

Each family must decide on their comfort level with the in-person portion of the hybrid model. Families choosing not to send their children/teens, preferring a strictly online model, will be provided all the videos, books and materials, to provide a worthwhile faith experience at home.

Continue, on the home front, to emphasize good hygiene practices including hand washing often, avoiding touching face and covering coughs and sneezes, etc.

Monitor your children/teens for any sign of illness, be sure they do not attend class if any symptoms arise and above all, notify the pastor and head of faith formation immediately if your young person becomes ill following a faith formation evening.

On in-person evenings, please do the following:

- A. Send your child/teen with & wearing a face covering.
- B. If you think a drink will be necessary in the 75 minute time frame, send a water bottle, as communal water fountains are turned off.
- C. Be sure your family members coming to an in-person evening take a bathroom break before leaving home. That will allow us to limit use of the sanitizing necessary between individual usage.
- D. Please be ON TIME when dropping your young person off and picking them up. This will help prevent students from congregating in groups and getting them, appropriately social distanced, to their classrooms and back to their vehicles.

COVID-19 has reshaped many of our past faith formation and religious education programs and activities. It seems obvious that these new and unique challenges are not going away anytime soon and the 2020-2021 year at St. Mary's Parish will necessarily, be different for everyone. Let's continue to pray together for all those affected by COVID-19 and for an end to this pandemic.

☆ Safety and Hygiene Procedures ☆

* All COVID-19 positive persons and those living with them (children and teens) may not participate in any faith formation program until after they have self-quarantined according to CDC guidelines.

*All faith formation teachers and volunteers will be trained in this preparedness program and understand their critical role in insuring a healthy environment for faith formation.

- ✓ Every in-person faith formation class for all grades will be held with no more than 50% of room capacity utilized
- ✓ Classroom chairs will be set up allowing for the 6 foot social distancing requirement
- ✓ Face covering are required at this time for all participants over the age of five (Minnesota Executive Order 20-81). Please consult the Minnesota Department of Health for legitimate exceptions.
- ✓ Attendance will be taken in all faith formation classes, maintained on file and allow for teacher notation of non conformance to guidelines.
- ✓ No materials will be shared between students. Each individual will have a personal tub containing everything needed for a class evening, including a textbook if appropriate.
- ✓ Individual tubs will contain Kleenex and hand sanitizer but not water bottles. Each student will need to bring a personal water bottle if a drink might be necessary in the 75 minute class period.
- ✓ The water supply has been shut off to all communal water fountains.
- ✓ No food or snacks will be shared within the classroom however, teachers might consider a pre-packaged bag for each attendee on special occasions.
- ✓ Teachers and adult volunteers will help ensure that physical contact between individuals is avoided (high five's, hugs, etc.).
- ✓ Adult volunteers will monitor the arrival and dismissal of students in order to maintain social distancing guidelines. Six foot markers will be placed from the main entrance to the stairs and down the lower level hallway.
- ✓ Classrooms will be dismissed in a staggered time schedule to allow for social distancing as students leave the building.

- ✓ Adults will be asked to use hand sanitizer prior to collecting “take home” materials including Bibles, Catechisms, Home Lesson packs. WOG Logs, etc.
- ✓ Teachers may use pre-recorded music, but collective singing or recitation will not be allowed within a classroom as per Guidelines.

- ✓ Parish restrooms will be cleaned and sanitized before and after every in-person class evening. An adult supervisor will ensure that only one student at a time uses the restroom and will do a quick wipe down following each use.
- ✓ Each classroom is thoroughly sanitized following every in-person class evening. This includes tables, chairs, doors, door handles and any frequently touched surfaces. Additionally, the entire parish center is sanitized on a weekly basis when used.
- ✓ Individual student material tubs will be removed and stored in a separate sanitized room.
- ✓ If the hybrid model numbers allow for an in-church celebration, praise and worship or parent catechesis event, all the guidelines for the “Parish Preparedness Plan” (published on May 26, 2020) will be followed.
- ✓ All teachers and volunteers in the faith formation program will be required to sign an Adult Liability Waiver.

An inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists anywhere people are present. COVID-19 is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, senior citizens and people with underlying medical conditions are especially vulnerable to COVID-19. Faith Formation Program has undertaken precautionary cleaning, disinfecting, and implemented social distancing guidelines to help reduce the risk of exposure. However, St. Mary’s Faith Formation Program cannot guarantee that visitors are 100% safe from exposure to COVID-19. Therefore, St. Mary’s Parish and Faith Formation Program recommends that people over 65 or with underling health conditions not attend mass at this time and continue to worship online. Attendance at liturgies is at your own risk.