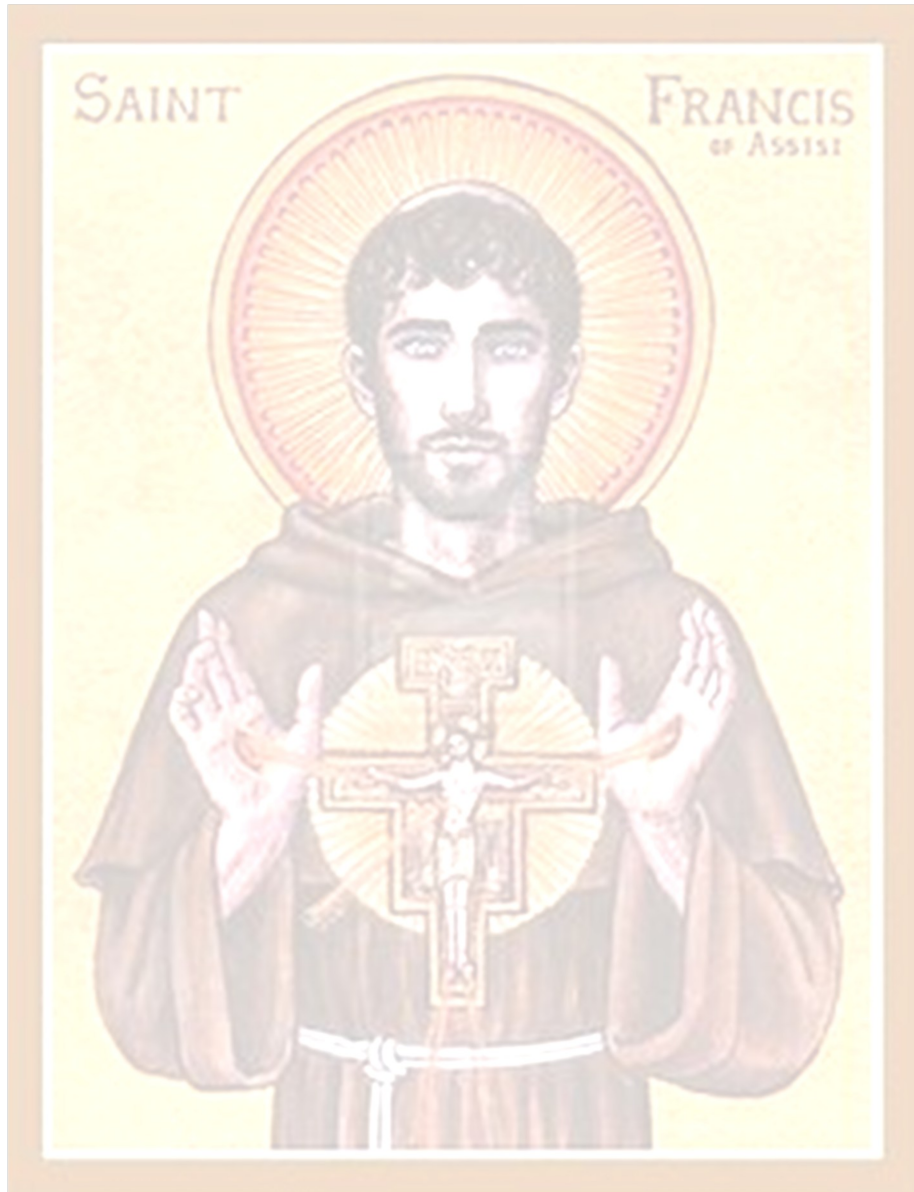


# *Saint Francis of Assisi*

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH  
862 YADKINVILLE ROAD, MOCKSVILLE, NC 27028



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK

**Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Church**  
**Faith Formation General Policies**  
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**Welcome!**

Welcome to the Faith Formation Program for St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church. The Faith Formation Program is a ministry and an outreach of St. Francis of Assisi Church for the young people of our parish and for their parents/guardians. The handing on of our Catholic Faith is a serious God-given obligation for all parents who are the first teachers of their children. We at St. Francis of Assisi Church are here to assist you in your duty as parents and educators of your children. We cannot take your place in this important task. This handbook is designed to convey basic information regarding our policies and procedures. Please keep it handy and refer to it often.

Should you have any questions or concerns, the Coordinator of Faith Formation, Renee Hoke, may be reached at: **336-998-1058** or via email at: **hokemngt@yadtel.net**

**Admission Policy**

In order to be eligible to participate in the Faith Formation Program, families of students must be registered in the parish **and** actively participate in the support of the parish through the donation of their time, talent and treasure. **Furthermore, it is expected that those families enrolled in the Faith Formation Program regularly attend weekend Mass throughout the year.** The Faith Formation Program of St. Francis of Assisi Parish does not discriminate in its educational programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender, or age.

## **Registration**

Each child **MUST** be formally registered, each year, in order to be eligible to participate in the Faith Formation Program, and/or prepare for the reception of the Sacraments. All registration materials are available from the Faith Formation Office.

We ask you to please consider the following:

- 1) As a ministry and outreach of St. Francis of Assisi parish, our Faith Formation Program is entirely supported by the generosity of our parish family. It is not designed as a fundraiser for the parish. The Program Fees that each family pays help us to defray the numerous costs associated with our Faith Formation program. Your fees help us to ensure that our Program is able to continue to exist and assist you and your children.
- 2) For those with a financial need, payment plans or a scholarship may be available. Please contact the Pastor to make an appointment to help discuss your need.
- 3) Fees are due at the time of registration.
- 4) There will be no refunds on students who withdraw or are released from the Program due to excessive lateness or absence.

To be eligible to participate in the Faith Formation Program, families of students must:

- 1) be registered in the parish,
- 2) actively participate in the support of the parish through the donation of their time, talent, and treasure,
- 3) regularly attend weekend Mass throughout the year,
- 4) **MAKE SURE THAT THEIR CHILDREN ATTEND CLASSES ON TIME AND ARE PICKED UP AT THE END OF CLASS (AGAIN ON TIME),**
- 5) **VOLUNTEER THROUGHOUT THE YEAR TO ASSIST CATECHISTS, CRE, AND ASSISTANTS,** and
- 6) notify the office of any changes in their email address or mobile number. This is the only way that we can notify you in case of emergency. If you do not update your information, you may be removed from the program.

Registration Fees are as follows:

**\$50 PER child**

Additional fees for Sacramental Preparation are subject to change and will be posted at the time of registration:

- First Reconciliation/Holy Communion: **\$50** per child (one-time)
- Confirmation II: **\$25** per child (one-time)

## **Baptismal Certificates**

- Every student **MUST** have a Baptismal Certificate on file.
- A copy of your child's Baptismal certificate must be turned in at the time of initial registration when child first enters the program.
- If a copy is already on file in the Faith Formation Office, another one is not necessary.

## **Attendance, Lateness and Absences**

The Diocese of Charlotte requires that each parish keep accurate attendance records of the formation provided for children and youth. Attendance at all Faith Formation classes and meetings is expected and will be noted. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the Faith Formation Coordinator, Renee Hoke at **336-998-1058** to communicate any issues or circumstances. The following is a listing of our procedures and guidelines for attendance:

- Latecomers can be disruptive to the class. Students who regularly arrive late may be released from the Program at the discretion of the CRE.
- Regular attendance and participation is crucial for success. Missing **5** regular class sessions is reason to be released from the program. **Please note - all fees, etc., are non-refundable.**

### **Textbooks and Supplies**

All grades will have a certain amount of homework each week. Homework will be appropriate to grade level. It may consist of a review of the material which was covered in that week's lesson and may include research, memorization or worksheets. Please have your child bring his/her book and any homework to class each week unless otherwise advised. Lost textbooks and activity books will be replaced at the cost to the parent.

### **Dress Code**

Dress should be modest and conducive to learning. The following apparel will not be permitted:

- Spaghetti straps or halter tops.
- Tops that do not cover the waistline.
- T-shirts or pants with inappropriate sayings / pictures.
- Short shorts
- Shoes with wheels (Wheelies) as they are prone to accidents.

A student not following the dress code will be given a First Warning notice or sent to the FF Office depending on the seriousness of the dress code violation. Parents will be notified as needed.

### **Entertainment Technologies & Cell Phones**

The use of iPods and other electronic devices will not be permitted at any time once a student enters the premises. Cell phones must be turned off and only used with Catechist' or CRE's permission.

### **Medications**

Our catechists may not administer medication. If your child is taking medication that would affect his or her participation, please notify the Faith Formation Office. For your child's safety, please be sure all allergies are recorded on the registration forms.

### **Arrival and Dismissal of Students**

Keeping our children and youth safe is a priority of our programs. **Students are expected to arrive on time and be picked up on time.** Please note – the parking lot is NOT a safe place and children should be instructed to move with caution in the parking lot and should NOT be moving in the parking lot without adult supervision. The following guidelines explain the safety structures for the arrival and dismissal of our students:

#### **Arrival:**

- When arriving, parents are expected to park and walk their children into the building.
- Children and their parent are to wait outside of their assigned classroom in the main hallway until a catechist is available.
- Children needing to leave early are required to be signed out by their parent/guardian.
- To enable class to begin on time, please make sure your child is in attendance **five minutes before** the scheduled starting time.

#### **Dismissal:**

- Parents are expected to park, sign-out and meet their children in the hallway outside of the classrooms and walk them to the car.
- If the catechist has only a few students remaining or a parent is clearly late, the catechist may walk the children to the FF coordinator to be supervised until the parent arrives. The program coordinator will wait until all students are picked up. Please, BE ON TIME.

### **Pick Up Authorization Form**

All parents / guardians will complete the Child Pick-up Authorization Form on the back of the registration form. Only authorized **ADULT** persons listed on the form will be allowed to pick up your child/children. All authorized persons will be required to show proof of identification (a photo ID). Students not having an authorized person to pick them up will be transported to the church office of the Coordinator of Religious Education until an authorized person comes to get them. If this becomes a regular occurrence, the children will be removed from the program.

### **Security (Admittance into the Building/Facility)**

All actions taken shall bear in mind the safety and well-being of both student and catechists.

- After Saturday morning classes, you **must** pick up your student by coming inside the building and signing out. Please, move slowly and be on the look-out for children and other vehicles as you drive away.
- In the case of accident or sudden sickness, the Faith Formation Coordinator, catechist, or an adult volunteer will give appropriate immediate care and notify the parents/guardians.
- In the case of an emergency/natural disaster, teachers, coordinators and the director will remain with the children until either a parent or designated person picks the children up. A checkout system will be provided for parents/guardians to sign out their child.
- Parking – **Parents must park their cars in church parking spaces to drop off or pick up students.** Standing behind cars parked in the parking lot is not allowed. If you can't find space in the parking lot you need to park at the bank. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

### **Leaving Class Early**

If a student needs to leave class early, the custodial parent must come inside the facility to sign out the student.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

Cancellations for all classes will be announced on WXII Channel 12 as well as their website [www.wxii12.com](http://www.wxii12.com). A message will be sent through the **FlockNote text to the cell phone number** that you provided at registration. It is your responsibility to check for all inclement weather announcements and to update your contact information with any changes.

### **Discipline in the Classroom**

Students are expected to follow the rules of the program. As such, courtesy, cooperation, and respect are always expected. Parents will be notified if a student behaves in such a way that continually disrupts the class. Continued disruptive behavior will result in the student being released from the Program.

### **Our Catechists and Assistants**

Please note that our catechists and assistants are unpaid volunteers in our program. We are very grateful to them because they so generously give of their time and talents to minister to the young people of our parish. In addition to their weekly commitment, they spend many hours preparing for their classes. We ask you to support them, pray for them and express your appreciation whenever possible.

### **Family Involvement**

We expect parents and legal guardians of all students to volunteer of their time and talent throughout the year to the best of their ability. Knowing that work schedules often make it difficult to volunteer on a regular basis, it is expected that all parents volunteer to assist at one event, etc., at least once per year. Please contact our volunteer coordinator, **Iris Torres** at **980-565-6456** to schedule your time to volunteer. Our catechists and students thank you for your help!

### **Children must attend FF classes every year!**

Why does my child have to attend every year? When your child was baptized, you promised to raise him/her in the Catholic Faith. This obligation included your responsibility to see that your child is formed in the Faith throughout their formative years. This formation only happens gradually as the child grows in "wisdom, age and grace" and is given the opportunity to learn at the appropriate age level. Of course, the child's faith formation begins at birth and continues through their life at home with you. You, the parent, are the primary teacher of Faith to your children. The parish program is intended to help you fulfill this obligation, but does not replace your obligation. On-going faith formation is a life-time obligation for all the baptized. Our Faith Formation program assumes the child is coming every single year.

## **Program Instructional Overview**

We will be using the “**Alive In Christ**” series for Grades 1-5. The program is designed to build upon each succeeding year. “**Alive In Christ**” **Uses Seven Core Lessons Scope and Sequence:** Revelation, Trinity, Jesus Christ, The Church, Morality, Sacraments, and Kingdom of God.

Each Grade Level Focuses on of the following:

1st Grade: **Jesus Christ**

2nd Grade: **Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist**

3rd Grade: **The Church**

4th Grade: **The Moral Life**

5th Grade: **The Seven Sacraments**

**Grades 1 & 2** are “component grades” in that they comprise a mandatory 2-year preparation for both the Sacrament of Reconciliation and for First Holy Communion. In order to be eligible to receive these Sacraments, students are required to complete both Grade 1 & Grade 2, in addition to a Preparation Class for **each** Sacrament, before reception of either Sacrament.

**First and Second Grade** students are responsible for the following prayers to memorize and important things to know:

- The Sign of the Cross (word and action)
- Genuflection (action)
- The Our Father/Lord’s Prayer
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- The Decalogue (recite the 10 Commandments in correct order)
- An Act of Contrition
- Grace Before Meals

**Grades 3, 4, 5, & SIC** - It is the expectation of the Faith Formation Program that students will continue to regularly attend and successfully complete the required instruction for each of the “bridge year” grades.

**Third and Fourth Grade** students will need to know the following:

- The prayers and important things to know listed for the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grades, plus
- The Apostle’s Creed,
- How to Say the Rosary.

**Fifth and SIC** students will need to know the following:

- The prayers and important things to know listed for the previous grades, plus
- The Fatima Prayer,
- The Seven Sacraments,
- The Precepts of the Church.

**Gap Years** - from 3rd grade and up, any students who have “gap” years in their formation will be required to successfully complete one year of class before being admitted to the Sacramental classes.

### **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Students preparing to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time must successfully complete the First Reconciliation Program in addition to the “component grade years”. Parental involvement in the First Reconciliation Program is key to the success of the student.

The following factors are included in determining whether the child is ready to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation:

- The child’s ability to distinguish between accidental and deliberate wrong;
- The child’s awareness of the need for forgiveness and the child’s trust in Our Lord’s forgiving love;
- The child’s ability to express wrong-doing and sorrow in his or her own words;
- Free desire of the child to receive the Sacrament;
- The child’s simple understanding that the priest and the Church have a special role in bringing us God’s forgiveness;
- Memorization of the prayers listed for 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade;
- The child has successfully completed the Sacrament of Reconciliation Prep Program.

**Each student preparing to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be evaluated TWICE as to their readiness to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the Prep classes. The final decision rests with the Pastor.**

**Please note: the Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated prior to the reception of First Holy Communion. The student may not receive Holy Communion until they have completed the Preparation classes for First Holy Communion.**

### **Sacrament of First Eucharist (Holy Communion)**

Students preparing for First Holy Communion must successfully complete the First Eucharist Program in addition to the “component grade years”. Parental involvement in the First Eucharist Program is key to the success of the student.

The following factors are included in determining whether the child is ready to receive First Holy Communion:

- The child has sufficient knowledge to understand the mystery of Christ in the Eucharist according to his/her capacity;
- The child is able to distinguish the Body and Blood of Christ from ordinary food;
- The child has a desire to receive Our Lord reverently in Holy Communion with faith and devotion;
- The child has been instructed and understands the options and manner of receiving the Eucharist. These options are under one (or both) Species; standing or kneeling; and in the hand or on the tongue, with the audible response “Amen” before they receive;
- The child has successfully completed the First Holy Communion Prep Program.

**Each student preparing to receive First Holy Communion will be evaluated as to their readiness to receive the Sacrament. The final decision rests with the Pastor.**

**Please note: the Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated prior to the reception of First Holy Communion. The student may not receive Holy Communion until they have completed the Preparation classes for First Holy Communion.**

- Children enrolled in the First Reconciliation Preparation Program are permitted **1** absence.
- Children enrolled in the First Holy Communion Preparation Program are permitted **1** absence.

## **Sacrament of Confirmation**

**Confirmation I & Confirmation II** are “component grades” in that they comprise a mandatory 2-year preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. To be eligible for Confirmation I, the student must be no older than 13, with prior consecutive instruction. Students who do not successfully meet **all** requirements will not be eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. In order to be eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, the student is required to complete both Confirmation I & Confirmation II, in addition to other requirements which are outlined below. Requirements having a due date may be turned in within a month prior to the actual due date. The due date is final! Missing the due date will result in release from the program.

### **Confirmation I Requirements:**

- Parent/Student Orientation meeting with CRE.
- Completion of assigned service projects.
- Confirmation Examination Questions.
- Prayers to Memorize and Things to Know.

### **Confirmation II Requirements:**

- Parent/Student Orientation meeting with CRE.
- Completion of assigned service projects.
- Memorize Confirmation Prayers and Examination Questions.
- Select an eligible sponsor, properly complete the sponsor form, and return by due date.
- Write a report on your Patron Saint.
- Write an Essay Letter on “Why I Want to be Confirmed”.
- Pass a Final Examination to be taken on the last class of the year. No show, no exam, no Confirmation. No exceptions, no make-ups, etc..
- All required forms and reports listed above must be turned in at start of examination. If not, no exam. No exam, no Confirmation.
- Students will be notified of results by the following weekend.
- Those who pass, will be invited to a Group meeting with the Pastor (date to be determined.)
- Attendance at the Confirmation Retreat.
- All Confirmation meetings & Rehearsal are mandatory.

### **Forms (sponsor, exam packet, etc.)**

**1st copy—free of charge**

**2nd copy—\$5 each**

**3rd copy—\$10 each**

**If more copies are needed, then the student is too immature or not responsible enough to be confirmed.**