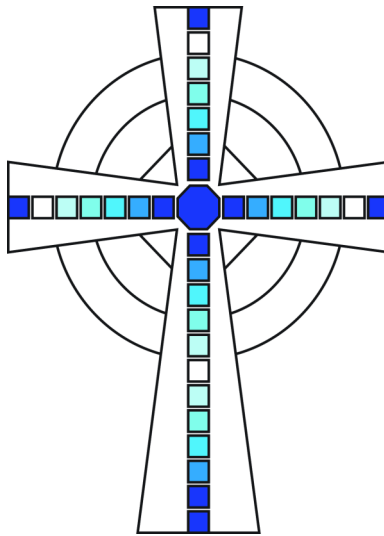


St. Laurence Catholic Church

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION & FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM HANDBOOK

All Ages through Adults



**We the people of St. Laurence Catholic Church
are centered in the love of Christ
and live to glorify God in all we do.**

**Ave Maria Parish Life Center
3103 Sweetwater Blvd.
Sugar Land, TX 77479
281-265-5774 Phone
281-565-0894 Fax
www.stlaurence.org**

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General Class Information		
PROGRAM	TIMES/LOCATIONS	DATES
PRESCHOOL (3- to 4-year-olds)	Sundays, Once a month 10:14 am -11:30 am - Ave Maria Center	September—May
ELEMENTARY (K-5th grades)	Tuesdays 6:00 - 7:15 pm - Ave Maria Center Wednesdays 5:15 - 6:30 pm - Ave Maria Center	Early September—First week of May
FIRST RECONCILIATION/ FIRST COMMUNION PREPARATION (2nd grade and up)	Parent taught program with large group meetings on various dates	September—May
EDGE Middle School (6th to 8th grades)	Wednesdays, 7:00 - 8:15 pm - Ave Maria Center	Early September—First week of May
LIFE TEEN High School (9th to 12th grades)	Sundays, 6:30 - 8:15 pm - Ave Maria Center	End of August—First week of May
CONFIRMATION (10th to 11th grades)	Sundays 6:30 - 8:15 pm - Ave Maria Center in conjunction with Life Teen	September—September
FAMILY FAITH PROGRAM	First Sunday of each month, 9:15 am -12:00 Noon and 11:00 am -1:45 pm Ave Maria Center	September—May
RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults and Children)	Inquiry, Sundays 10:30 -11:30 am	Last 2 weeks in August
	Initiation process, Sundays 10:15 am - 12:15 pm Ave Maria Center	Second week of September – 3 weeks after Easter

FAITH FORMATION CONTACT NUMBERS
Phone: 281-265-5774
Fax: 281-565-0894



FAITH FORMATION MISSION STATEMENT

Faith Formation Programs at St. Laurence Catholic Church community exist to serve and support all members in their spiritual growth and profession of Gospel values. Each program strives to prepare each individual and family to be better Catholic witnesses to the larger community by strengthening their foundations in the sacraments, liturgy, and Catholic teachings based on a Vatican II philosophy. We acknowledge that every parishioner is called to share his or her God-given gifts with others through education, prayer, service, and celebration of Christ in our lives.

In light of our mission, each program seeks to:

- + Celebrate the sacredness of creation.
- + Support parents in their role as the first and best Catholic witnesses and teachers of their children.
- + Place an emphasis on family, faith sharing, and community service.
- + Serve people diverse in age, stages of life, and special needs.
- + Secure a large number of enthusiastic volunteers who are strongly committed to their ministry.
- + Provide varied ministry formation programs.
- + Respond to the rapidly changing needs of a growing parish.
- + Emphasize that our faith development is an ongoing process from cradle to grave.

Welcome to St. Laurence Faith Formation!

Faith Formation is about “making disciples of all nations” (*Mt.28:18*). At the very heart of what we do through faith formation is the fact that being Catholic is a way of life to be witnessed everyday whether at home, work, school, or at play. Living a Catholic life is not simply done by going to Mass regularly or attending Faith Formation sessions. It is through these programs and through the preparation for the Sacraments of the Church that we hope to foster within each person a lasting relationship with God that will grow and develop over a lifetime.

This handbook has been compiled as a resource to inform parishioners of the St. Laurence Faith Formation policies and procedures. It is our hope that this handbook will facilitate a greater understanding of the cooperation necessary to formulate a positive and meaningful Catholic faith experience for all.

As your Faith Formation staff, we make every attempt to create a welcoming spirit that empowers our fellow parishioners to grow in faith in order to go forth as sons and daughters of the Creator and share the message of God’s unconditional love through Christ. Please continue to pray for Christ’s blessings in all our efforts and feel free to contact us at the Religious Education & Faith Formation Office with any concerns you might have. We look forward to walking with you and your family on a faith journey throughout your lives.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION & FAITH FORMATION STAFF

Director of Faith Formation—Christine Dunn

Adult Faith Formation & RCIA Coordinator – Justin Frato

Adult Faith Formation Assistant Coordinator—Mary Visser

Baptism and RCIA Assistant— Barb Roy

High School Youth Minister – Mike Cleary

High School Confirmation Youth Minister – Mike Cleary

Middle School Youth Minister – Cindy Martin

Youth Ministry Administrative Assistant – Talia Weinle

First Sacraments & Family Coordinator– Melissa Calcote

Preschool Coordinator— Susan Mule’

Elementary Coordinator– Joan Hastreiter

Elementary & First Sacrament Administrative Assistant – Molly Zimmer

Registrar—Ruba Kaiser

Annulment & Spiritual Direction Coordinator – Anne Marie Daniel

Parish Library Coordinator—Susan Mule’

POLICIES

All staff members and volunteers at St. Laurence Parish are required to sign an acknowledgment that they have read and understood the Ethical and Personal Conduct Policies of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

General Policies:

- Regular attendance at Sunday Mass is expected for elementary age children and older.
- Children attending St. Laurence Catholic School and their parents will participate in the sacramental preparation programs with the parish family.
- Youth attending Catholic High School and their parents will participate in the Confirmation sacramental preparation program with the parish family.
- Due to limited space weekly Elementary Faith Formation is reserved for children who do not attend Catholic schools and do not receive religious education as part of their curriculum. Youth in Catholic middle school and high school are welcome and encouraged to participate in the EDGE and Life Teen programs.
- The parents of children transferring from another program must submit a letter from the previous parish verifying formation and sacrament preparation completion.
- Children seven years of age or older who have not been baptized are invited to be part of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults adapted for children. Full initiation into the Church (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation) occurs at the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday.
- Parents and children are expected at all times to follow the enclosed Health, Safety and Environment Policies of St. Laurence Catholic Church as they are detailed throughout pages 19-34. Failure to comply may result in being withdrawn from the program. Safety is of the highest concern and therefore we appreciate your help in ensuring that these policies are enforced.

Emergency Cancellation:

The following criteria will be used to determine program closure/event cancellation.

As a general rule, St. Laurence Faith Formation program/sessions will follow Fort Bend ISD closures unless specifically notified that the program/event will be held.

Program closure/event cancellation notification will be made in the following ways-

- Posted online at www.stlaurence.org
- A recorded voice message will be placed on the Faith Formation main number at 281-265-5774
- If possible an email or text will be sent out notifying parents of advance cancellations
- If possible signage will be placed on roller signs by the covered entrance and on the glass doors at the front of the AMC.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Youth in grades 6-8 are dropped off and proceed immediately to Marian Hall.

Parking Vehicles

Pick-up youth at the covered entrance in the front of Ave Maria Center.

Drop Off & Pick Up Vehicles

All drop-offs and pick-ups form two lines entering by the **Austin Parkway entrance** and exiting onto Sweetwater Boulevard on right side line or exiting Colony Park on the left side with all traffic flowing in one direction. Please watch for children crossing the streets (especially in evening).

ELEMENTARY

Traffic Flow:

ALL traffic is encouraged to enter the Ave Maria Center parking lot via Austin Parkway. Traffic may enter via Sweetwater Blvd. *except* during the carpool times for Wednesday night EDGE. Colony Park Drive is an EXIT only and not an entrance to the AMC.

Arrival:

When arriving ALL parents are expected to park their vehicles in the lot and walk their child safely into the Marian Hall of the AMC. Parents must remain with their child until their group leader arrives. The building can only be entered through the main front door under the covered entrance. Once in the Marian Hall, your child will need to assemble in their designated class line until the session begins. After opening prayer, the group leader will take the children to their classrooms for the weekly lesson.

Dismissal:

ALL traffic is encouraged to enter the Ave Maria Center parking lot via Austin Parkway. Traffic may enter via Sweetwater Blvd. *except* during the carpool times for Wednesday night EDGE. Colony Park Drive is an EXIT only and not an entrance to the AMC.

At the end of each session, you will need to proceed to your child's classroom in the AMC for pick up. YOU WILL HAVE TO SIGN OUT your child from his/her classroom. Therefore, after class NO child will be allowed to meet their parent either outside in the parking lot or in the AMC lobby. The group leader will not release a child from the classroom except to a parent, guardian, or another adult designated *beforehand* in writing. You may then exit the AMC through the main doors under the covered entrance. Note that all other doors are emergency exits only, with alarms which will sound. Any special circumstances regarding pick-up (such as carpool arrangements with other designated adults) need to be provided *beforehand* IN WRITING to either the Elementary staff or directly to your child's group leader.

PRESCHOOL

Arrival & Dismissal:

One preschool parent will remain with their preschool child in their assigned meeting room in the AMC on Sunday mornings. Then, you can exit the AMC through the main doors under the covered entrance. Note that all other doors are emergency exits with alarms which will sound if used for egress.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

*Please contact the Faith Formation Staff at 281-265-5774
for more information on volunteering for Faith Formation.*

Calling all Adults who are registered parishioners! Our children and youth programs is an entirely *volunteer-based* ministry which depends upon the time and talents of parents, grandparents, college students and other adults *just like you!!* **WE NEED YOU!!!**

Here are some of the key volunteers areas:

Elementary

- * **Group Leader** leads the weekly sessions by sharing the Catholic faith, encouraging prayer and worship, and being committed to the service of others. Continuing education and planning meetings and opportunities for prayer are offered throughout the year. Team teaching is strongly encouraged. Training is required and provided in August/September and updated throughout the year. For their own children, weekly Group Leaders pay only the book fee and sacramental preparation fee, if this latter fee is necessary. All group leaders must be a Confirmed, active Catholic who has completed the Safe Haven training (Safe Environment Training for Adults). **This is the position that is needed most to provide a solid program. Group Leaders are the foundation of the program.**
- * **Assistant Group Leader** assists a Group Leader weekly in presenting the lesson. The Assistant's first priority is weekly presence and support in the classroom. The Group Leader is primarily responsible for lesson plans and classroom management. The Assistant would be available to substitute their class when needed such as the Group Leader being sick, etc. Training is required, provided and updated throughout the year. All assistant group leaders must complete the Safe Haven training (Safe Environment Training for Adults). Middle School and High School youth are welcome to assist in the sessions along with an adult. All high school youth must complete the Jeremiah 1:7 safe environment training prior to volunteering in any role.
- * **Substitute Group Leader** takes over the responsibilities of the Group Leader in his/her absence. This commitment would be as needed throughout the year. A substitute Group Leader is contacted by the Group Leader or Elementary Coordinator prior to the date needed. All lessons and materials are provided. Training is encouraged and provided at the beginning of the year. All substitute group leaders must be a Confirmed, active Catholic who has completed the Safe Haven training (Safe Environment Training for Adults).
- * **Office Help** involves helping with any material preparation in the workroom: assembling projects, making up booklets, distributing materials into Group Leader bins/files, etc. All adult volunteers must complete the Safe Haven training (Safe Environment Training for Adults).
- * **Hallway Monitors** sit at various key hallway locations in the Ave Maria Center to monitor access to classrooms, answer questions, and provide emergency support when needed. All adult volunteers must complete the Safe Haven training (Safe Environment Training for Adults).

Please prayerfully consider stepping out in faith this year by becoming a group leader or assistant. No experience is necessary, just a passion for your faith and a desire to share that with our youngest church members. Training and materials are provided. To see a listing of our present needs based upon current registration, please go to our Catechist webpage at <http://www.stlaurence.org/the-catechist>.

Interested? Please contact Joan Hastreiter at jhastreiter@stlaurence.org or call 281-265-5774. This is an incredibly rewarding experience which you will never regret!

Middle School/High School/Confirmation

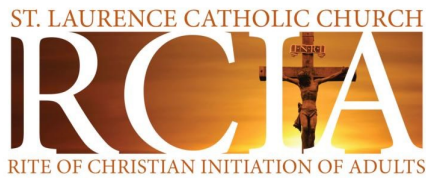
- * **Core Members** are faith sharers with the youth and help facilitate the large group sessions as well as their own small group discussion. The Core Team is a group of dedicated parishioners who are committed to diving into Christ-centered relationships with youth. They use their God-given gifts and talents to serve God's kingdom, by drawing the youth into God's presence. They accomplish this primarily through their relationship with youth: by walking through the ebbs and flows of daily life together. All group leaders must be a Confirmed, active Catholic who has completed the Safe Haven training (Safe Environment Training for Adults).
- * **Refreshments/Special Events/Environment** includes purchasing, at Parish expense, and setting up refreshments for special large group events. All adult volunteers must complete the Safe Haven training (Safe Environment Training for Adults).
- * **Chaperones** Social events and retreats require adult supervision. This is a great opportunity to show your interest in your youth's activities, get to meet other parents of your youth's peers, and have fun while doing it! If you wish to be involved in sharing your faith, consider chaperoning a retreat. All adult volunteers must complete the Safe Haven training (Safe Environment Training for Adults).
- * **Hall Monitors** help us create and maintain a safe, welcoming and courteous environment. All adult volunteers must complete the Safe Haven training (Safe Environment Training for Adults).

Interested? Please contact Cindy Martin at cindymartin@stlaurence.org for Middle School or Mike Cleary mcleary@stlaurence.org for High School. This is an incredibly rewarding experience which you will never regret!

Adult Faith Formation (AFF)

Adult Faith Formation welcomes your gifts and talents in various areas of ministry; hospitality (greeting, refreshments), catechists and sponsors for R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults and Children), team members for Connect Groups and New Evangelization ministries, Scripture facilitators/teachers, art and environment and hosts for short series, i.e. Connect and Marriage Enrichment programs, etc. We are grateful for your interest in our ministry and would love to hear from you!

Interested? Please contact Justin Frato at jfrato@stlaurence.org or Mary Visser at mvisser@stlaurence.org. This is an incredibly rewarding experience which you will never regret!



SACRAMENTS

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) instructs and assists those adults who wish to journey toward full initiation or reception into the Catholic Church. This includes adults who have never been baptized, adults who have been baptized in another Christian faith, and adults who were baptized Catholics but did not receive formal instruction in the faith or the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. Inquiry sessions are held the last two Sundays in August. The process begins in mid September and meets Sunday from 10:15 am to 12:15 pm. If you have a friend or relative who is interested in inquiring about the Catholic faith, please invite them to contact Justin Frato, Adult Faith Formation Coordinator at 281-265-5774 or email him at jfrato@stlaurence.org.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF CHILDREN (RCIC)

This process is for children and youth from 7 years to 18 years of age who have not been baptized or were baptized in another Christian faith and wish to become Catholic. It is typically a two year process with the first year in the child's respective Faith Formation grade level class and the second year in RCIA, the preparation process for full sacramental initiation. The process begins with a family conversation with a team member where the family is asked to express their desire to enter more fully into the Catholic community by attending Sunday Mass and participate in the RCIA process which is held Sunday mornings from 10:15 am to 12:15 pm. An adult companion, preferably at least one parent, must attend the sessions along with the child/youth. This person may be a sponsor or a godparent. The Rite of Christian Initiation is a process where one comes to a deeper understanding of the Lord. The final decision to join the church is up to the individual family and child/youth in collaboration with the RCIA staff. Please call Justin Frato at 281-265-5774 or email him at jfrato@stlaurence.org if you are interested in this process for your child(ren). For more information on both RCIA and RCIC go to stlaurence.org/rcia.

INFANT BAPTISM

Infant Baptism is for children from birth up until the age of 7 years of age. All children the age of 7 and older who have not been baptized will receive their sacraments through the Rite of Christian Initiation, adapted for children. Group Baptisms are scheduled three times a month. Preparation sessions are required for the parents of children to be baptized. Godparents are welcomed to attend, but not required for a baptism at St. Laurence.

There are 3 requirements to get your baby baptized at St. Laurence.

1. You must take, or have taken, a Baptism Class in the last 5 years
2. You need to complete a Baptism Registration Form.
3. We need a copy of the baby's official state issued Birth Certificate.

Baptism classes are held ten times a year on Saturdays from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm.

Call Barb Roy at 281-265-5774 or email her at broy@stlaurence.org to register for the class or go to <https://www.stlaurence.org/baptism> for more information.

CHILDREN'S FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST COMMUNION

One year of Faith Formation is required the year prior to beginning the process for preparation. "Faith Formation" refers to the child having received consistent and adequate religious formation through parochial school, systematic home schooling, or Faith Formation sessions. Through the formal Faith Formation class, children learn about the basic teachings of the Catholic Church and build a foundation upon which to prepare for the Sacraments.

In second grade and older, children may be registered for a sacramental preparation process (First Reconciliation and First Communion). It is designed to be a home study program, using the *Encounter with Christ* Sacrament Preparation Series (published by Our Sunday Visitor), to be supported with materials presented and studied within the child's respective Faith Formation format (Elementary Faith Formation, St. Laurence School, Family Faith, or Home Study Program). The preparation process runs from September through May. There are several required meetings for parents and/or children for sacramental preparation, in conjunction with a "home study" aspect for each sacrament. A part of this discernment if the child is ready to receive his/her sacraments is an assessment interview of the child prior to the celebration of sacraments.

Required Sacrament Meetings:

FALL

Reconciliation meeting (parents only)
Walk through Reconciliation (parent and child)
Reconciliation Retreat (one parent and child)
Reconciliation Assessment Interview of child

SPRING

Communion meeting (parents only)
Walk through the Church (parent and child)
Communion Retreat (one parent and child)
Communion Assessment Interview of child

First Reconciliation Celebration

Upon completion of the preparation process, First Reconciliation can be celebrated either at regularly scheduled confession times or at the group First Reconciliation service is scheduled in January for families of children who have completed preparation (date to be announced). Parents are encouraged to arrive at the beginning of the times listed below so their child can go first.

First Communion Celebration

Upon completion of the preparation process, First Communion may be received at a Family Group Mass scheduled for the spring (dates to be announced).

Please contact Melissa Calcote (mcalote@stlaurence.org) or Molly Zimmer (mzimmer@stlaurence.org) or call them at 281-265-5774 for more information.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance or Confession)

For those who have already been prepared, Reconciliation is offered weekly at the following day/

CONFIRMATION

In Confirmation, Christians receive a special outpouring and deepening of the spiritual gifts that they received when they were baptized, just like the apostles of Jesus Christ received on Pentecost. (CCC 1285; 1302) This increase of these spiritual gifts that are received in the Sacrament of Confirmation help the baptized Christian to more fully live as a disciple of Jesus and share the faith with others. (CCC 1303)

High School Confirmation

The St. Laurence Catholic Church Confirmation preparation program is open to 10th or 11th graders who have been baptized and are already active and registered members of St. Laurence Catholic Church. This means during the year immediately prior to preparing for Confirmation, they completed at least one-year of Faith Formation from our parish (Life Teen or Home study found on page 14 of this handbook) or they were enrolled and completed at least one year at a Catholic high school.

During the Confirmation year, each high-school-aged candidate will register attend consistently Life Teen, which is our parish's High School Faith Formation program. At Life Teen, each high school youth is assigned to a small group where we hope they find support and guidance not only while preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation but also through the rest of their time in high school as well.

Steps for high school youth to receive Confirmation at St. Laurence Catholic Church include:

- Registering for Life Teen and attending these Sunday evening sessions (Life Nights) consistently
- Register for Confirmation preparation
- Attend one of the two Parent and Teen Confirmation Information Sessions
- Attend the Confirmation specific sessions that take place during the year at various Life Nights
- Attend a Confirmation Retreat
- Choose an Adult Sponsor that is a Confirmed, practicing Catholic, other than the candidate's parent.
- Choose a Confirmation Name (Name of a canonized saint)
- Participate in acts of service
- Attend the Rite of Confirmation Mass where the Sacrament of Confirmation is received.

For more information about the Life Teen program at St. Laurence, please see page 14 of this handbook.

Please contact Mike Cleary at mcleary@stlaurence.org or 281-265-5774. Check out the Confirmation webpage at www.stlaurence.org/confirmation.

Adult Confirmation

The sealing of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation is the final sacrament of initiation into the Catholic Church. If, for some reason, you have not received this powerful sacrament, we encourage you to do so! Once each year Adult Confirmation preparation is offered for Catholics at least 18 years of age, graduated from high school, already baptized, received first Eucharist, actively practicing their faith, and if married, marriage must be sacramental in the Catholic Church. There are ten sessions required to prepare for the sacrament on Thursday evenings during the spring. The celebration of Confirmation would take place on the feast of Pentecost.

Please contact Mary Visser at mvisser@stlaurence.org or 281-265-5774 . Check out the Adult Confirmation webpage at <http://www.stlaurence.org/adultconfirmation>.

HOLY MATRIMONY

The focus of marriage preparation is not centered primarily on planning the wedding. Its focus is on preparing to live out a lifelong union of love with the Lord. This is not intended to diminish the couple's wedding ceremony, but to put it into proper perspective - namely, the significant sacramental event that initiates married life.

To begin marriage preparation, please plan to attend a Wedding Information Session at least six months prior to the proposed wedding date. Nine months to a year is preferred. At the Wedding Information Session, you will learn what classes are required for your marriage preparation, how to register for each class, and details about having your wedding at St. Laurence. Please email Betty Holub at bholub@stlaurence.org or call 281-980-9812 to inquire and to register for the session you would like to attend.

Also, please consider the following important information...

According to the Canon Law (the law of the Church), in order for a marriage to be valid, there are certain requirements:

- at least one of the spouses must be a baptized Catholic;
- the wedding must be celebrated in Catholic church in the presence of a Catholic priest/deacon/bishop and in the presence of two other witnesses;
- the two spouses must be free to be married (e.g., no prior valid marriages);
- they must be psychologically mature and capable of consenting to the marriage; and they must understand the nature of Catholic marriage (i.e., exclusive, permanent, and open to having children).

Please check out the Holy Matrimony webpage at <http://www.stlaurence.org/holy-matrimony>

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

The sacrament of Anointing the Sick is for the healing and spiritual strengthening of those who are impaired by sickness or old age. A person who is to undergo surgery may also be anointed. This sacrament is for the sick, and not only the dying, so please request the sacrament when illness is discovered. The presence of loved ones and friends who pray along with the priest is important at the anointing. This sacrament will be celebrated at any time upon request. It is also offered the 1st Wednesday of every month at the 6:30 PM Mass.

Please contact one of the priests or call the church office at 281-980-9812.

FAMILY MINISTRY

FAMILY FAITH

FAMILY FAITH is a monthly Faith Formation experience for the entire family. This program is offered as an alternative to the weekly faith formation sessions offered by the parish. As the first and best teachers of their children regarding faith and morals, parent(s) will find that the FAMILY FAITH program supports them in that endeavor by providing regular opportunities to gather as a family and share their faith with each other in an intentional, relevant way.

Through group instruction, discussions and activities/exercises, family members grow closer to each other by sharing their faith. They also become connected to the larger community of other parish families in the program who encourage and support one another through prayer, deed and fellowship. The program coordinator, Melissa Calcote, and the CORE Team volunteers strive to provide a welcoming environment where participating families take turns serving each other during the course of the year by sharing the duties that help make FAMILY FAITH operate smoothly.

Each month, there is time for large group experiences, family Bible study/discussion and age level sessions taught by parent catechists (small group leaders) for all children ages 3 years through high school. Families will be assigned homework and/or a project to do during the month at home between sessions.

Sacrament preparation is not a part of the FAMILY FAITH program, and requires separate registration. Those who are candidates for Confirmation must attend regularly scheduled Confirmation sessions. High school and middle school youth are also encouraged to participate in the LIFE TEEN and EDGE programs, respectively. Registration forms for the sacraments may be found under the 'Faith Formation' tab of the church website www.stlaurence.org/registration.

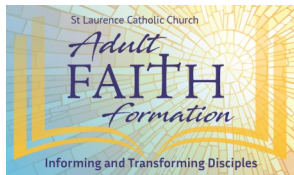
The FAMILY FAITH program is offered on the first Sunday of each month from September –May with a few exceptions. It runs from 9:15 am to 12:00 pm and 11:00 am to 1:45 pm each month. Registration is limited each year to the first 120 families.

Please contact Melissa Calcote at mcalcote@stlaurence.org or at 281-265-5774. Check out the Family Faith webpage at <http://stlaurence.org/family-faith>.

FAMILY GATHER NIGHTS

Knowing that families who play and pray together, stay together, we offer fun gathering for families throughout the year. Check out our Family Gather Nights where we gather for dinner and then play together as we learn about our faith.

Please contact Melissa Calcote at mcalcote@stlaurence.org or at 281-265-5774. Check out the Family Ministry webpage at <http://stlaurence.org/family-ministry>.



ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Adult Faith Formation sessions are open to everyone. There are a variety of speakers, workshops, Bible studies, prayer groups, personal growth, seminar/series, and community evangelization experiences that are offered throughout the year. Programs are announced in the weekly parish bulletin and E-blast. Those who are interested can sign up for the St. Laurence AFF Updates via Flocknote or check out the parish website.

CONNECT GROUPS

We are made for connection with God and one another. Connect Groups help to facilitate this process through small group meetings where there are opportunities for prayer, study, support, and fellowship. We have two types of Connect groups that you can join, a general group and one for actively parenting married couples. In order to get groups started, a contact person and host are needed. Please consider serving in one of these roles. For more information and to sign up go to www.stlaurence.org/connectgroups.

For more information call the Adult Faith Formation Office at 281-265-5774, and speak to Justin Frato (jfrato@stlaurence.org) or Mary Visser (mvisser@stlaurence.org). You can also visit the St. Laurence website at <http://www.stlaurence.org/aff> for updated information.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

The mission of the St. Laurence Young Adult ministry is to bring together young adults in the community by providing opportunities for fellowship with one another while upholding and growing in our faith. Our meet – ups are a variety of social, service and spiritual activities. This ministry is led by volunteers. The group is open to ages 18 and over; for those single, engaged or married; for those with or without children; for parishioners and non-parishioners. We send invites using both our Facebook Group and email. We offer different events for different age groups and stages of life. Please come to the events that best suit you.

To see our events, go to <https://www.stlaurence.org/ya> or visit 'St. Laurence Young Adults' on Facebook. Contact Justin Frato at jfrato@stlaurence.org or 281-265-5774 for more information.

PARISH LIBRARY

St. Laurence is blessed with a beautiful parish library to support your learning of the faith. Library cards are issued to those who fill out the application. Then you can begin to check out one of our many faith-filled resources. There are also library programs and book clubs for adults and children as well as a summer reading program for children and adults.

To learn more about the Parish Library, please contact Susan Mule' at smule@stlaurence.org or call her at 281-265-5774. Check out the webpage at <http://stlaurence.org/parish-library>



HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

Life Teen is a high school youth ministry program designed to reach, engage and encounter the high school youth of the parish enabling them to connect to community, and encounter the Gospel in a new way. The mission of St. Laurence High School Youth Ministry is to draw young people into communion with Christ through the Eucharist and to cultivate a way of life centered on Christ. Life Teen is open to any high school youth from 9th grade to 12th grade.

Life Nights — offered most Sundays after Life Teen Mass until 8:15 pm in the Ave Maria Center. Our 4-year comprehensive high school catechesis is both intentional and systematic. We follow the United States Bishops suggested curriculum to address current needs and situations relevant to youth culture yet dynamically orthodox in presentation and understanding of Roman Catholicism.

Discipleship groups — Another aspect of High School Youth Ministry is that of small group ministry called “Discipleship Groups” that meets on Tuesday from 6:00 - 8:15 pm. These small groups dive into scripture. Come join us for free food, community and faith sharing. These groups focus on relevant, challenging faith questions and help youth understand in a deeper manner the Catholic faith. They are run on a specific four-year curriculum which works hand in hand with our other Youth Ministry Events.

Legacy — This is the St. Laurence's program for our High School Juniors & Seniors ready to dive deeper into Catholic Teaching. These nights will focus on apologetics, leadership development & deepening our faith. Further, it will prepare our young people for a spiritual life that lasts long after youth group ends. We all will leave behind a legacy, what will yours be?

Home Study — an option is given to High School families who prefer to teach and form their youth in the faith at home through a systematic home study program. There are parent enrichment meetings that are a required part of the Home Study Program to ensure the coursework is being completed and we are supporting the parents in the process. See more details information on page 16 of this handbook.

Community Outreach — scheduled throughout the year as opportunities meant to provide an outlet for youth to actively live out their faith.

Conferences

- Steubenville High School Youth Conference - weekend in June
- Covecrest—week long Life Teen camp in July or August

Confirmation Preparation — Within the High School Youth Ministry experience is the Confirmation Preparation process during the sophomore or junior year. For more information about the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Laurence, check out page 8 of this handbook for more specifics.

Please contact for Mike Cleary at mcleary@stlaurence.org or Talia Weinle at tweinle@stlaurence.org or call them at 281-265-5774. Check out the webpage at <http://stlaurence.org/lifeteen>.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Middle School Youth Ministry program is open to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade youth.

EDGE Nights- are held Wednesday nights in the Ave Maria Center from 7:00 until 8:15 pm from September to May. The EDGE Program is based on the Life Teen model, but is geared toward middle school youth. EDGE is filled with Holy Scripture, Catholic Doctrine, and the liturgy. This program is composed of theme nights, issue nights, and socials. The theme nights come from the semester's theme and help to tie the whole of the program together. An EDGE night consists of a gathering prayer and activity, a talk about a certain topic, small group time, and a closing prayer with a challenge. Themes include Sacraments, Creeds, Christian Living, the 10 Commandments, Church and more. The issue nights cover topics that are important for middle school youth: the Church's view of life, the role of Mary, self-image, and others. The socials allow for the youth to develop relationships with other Christ-seeking middle school youth, and allow for the Core Team to meet and get to know other middle school youth. Parents are always welcome to attend and help out!

Home Study Program- comes from the *Alive in Christ* series. This program is designed to combine Holy Scripture, Catholic faith, and the liturgical year. Each area is given individual emphasis and integrates into the whole while simultaneously highlighting their own importance within the context of each of the lessons. The middle school *Alive in Christ* curriculum also offers exciting internet access and on-line programs to support chapter lessons. The *Alive in Christ* curriculum is divided into separate textbooks for each grade level, all focusing on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Also included are units on the liturgical year, prayer forms, and activities. There are parent enrichment meetings that are a required part of the Home Study Program to ensure the coursework is being completed and we are supporting the parents in the process. See more details information on page 16 of this handbook.

In addition to the EDGE Nights and the Home Study Program option, the middle school program also offers socials and community service opportunities for middle school youth throughout the year.

Please contact Cindy Martin at cindymartin@stlaurence.org or Talia Weinle at tweinle@stlaurence.org or call 281-265-5774 and check out the website <http://stlaurence.org/edge> for more information.



ELEMENTARY (Grades 1-5)

The Elementary Faith Formation program uses the Our Sunday Visitor (OSV) textbook series, *Alive in Christ*. *Alive in Christ* is intentional in its focus on the life, mission and saving work of Jesus Christ. This lays the foundation for lifelong relationship with Jesus, who continually leads us to his Father's love and call us through the Spirit to share in the divine life through His Church (CCC, 426). Mirroring the divine pedagogy (i.e. the gradual and relational way that God reveals himself to mankind and teaches us), each lesson encourages a personal and ongoing relationship with God. Following a systematically organized scope and sequence, seven key themes of Catholic teaching (reflected below) are repeated each year through a grade-level focus, which builds upon the child's knowledge of the faith at each developmental stage. Presented via the use of a series of Essential Questions (or EQ's) which serve as cognitive bookends for the lesson, the OSV texts support the *Catechetical Framework for Lifelong Faith Formation* as promulgated by Cardinal Di Nardo in August, 2013.

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| * Revelation | * Morality |
| * Trinity | * Sacraments |
| * Jesus Christ | * Kingdom of God |
| * The Church | |

Group Leaders and parents have access to a variety of resources provided by OSV, including access to the *Alive in Christ* website: aliveinchrist.osv.com. This website provides an amazing amount of content and links to help develop lessons and faith formation. Families may access this website to further explore or enhance their children's weekly lessons.

Elementary Program: The Elementary Faith Formation Program is a structured class that meets weekly from September through the first week of May. Children use the curriculum described above, as well as supplemental materials provided by their group leaders. Children share in their faith development with their peers in class lessons. Family participation is expected **at home** through regular Mass attendance, review of materials and prayers as well as through parental involvement in prayer services and/or service projects.

**Elementary sessions are held for one hour and fifteen minutes:
Tuesday 6:00 PM OR Wednesdays at 5:15 PM**

Home Study Program: The Home Study Program uses the same curriculum, and is provided with a corresponding Elementary program lesson schedule. All Home Study children are welcome to attend large group prayer services, as well as participate in service projects according to their grade level, throughout the year. See more details information on page 18 of this handbook.

Elementary Spiritual and Service Activities: Throughout the year opportunities are provided to participate in projects designed to engage children and their families in service, social, and spiritual activities. Some of these activities include the annual family Mass, occasional prayer services and grade-level service projects.

Please contact Joan Hastreiter at jhastreiter@stlaurence.org or Molly Zimmer at mzimmer@stlaurence.org or call 281-265-5774 for more information. Check out the webpage at <http://stlaurence.org/elementary-cce>.

KINDERGARTEN

Sessions are held from September to May during Elementary Faith Formation program
Kindergarten sessions are held for one hour and fifteen minutes:
Tuesday 6:00 PM OR Wednesdays at 5:15 PM

Kindergarten-age children use the Our Sunday Visitor —*Call To Faith* resource which is designed to support parents in educating their children about the Catholic faith by helping children:

- * To develop positive attitudes about themselves, their family, and friends by discovering and learning more about the many gifts, talents, and abilities that God has provided.
- * To increase their knowledge and participation in the Church's liturgical seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter.
- * To increase their knowledge about God and their friendship with Jesus.
- * To increase their knowledge and practice of Christian actions toward others, such as taking turns, listening, helping, caring, sharing, loving, and thanking others.
- * To increase their appreciation and celebration of God's love and goodness through Scripture, music, and prayer.

Because young children learn best through actual experiences, lessons in this program use stories, songs, dramatizations, finger plays, sensory activities, Scriptures, and prayers in which participation is the primary component.

There is limited space in classrooms but a Home Study Program option is available for parents who would like a textbook and set of focused activities to help them in sharing the faith with their preschool and kindergarten-aged children. See page 18 for details.

PRESCHOOL—CLUBHOUSE 10:14



The preschool program is a parent/child program once a month using the Our Sunday Visitor—*Allelu!* resources. Parents and children will play and learn together and benefit from meeting families with children at the same age and stage of life. Preschool children are not ready to absorb complicated religious beliefs so this program is very play oriented. Faith and religion for them is understandable in terms of their own experiences. This faith formation program, therefore, draws upon scriptural themes for many of its lesson topics and relates these to the children's everyday experience and level of understanding.

The preschool faith formation program for children ages 3-5 is designed to help stimulate their faith development by providing them with the following opportunities:

- * Reinforcement of Christian values and attitudes being taught at home.
- * Participation in Christian learning experiences and activities
- * An introduction to community worship through active participation in prayer and song.
- * Fellowship and fun with children their own age along with their parents.

Please contact Susan Mule' at smule@stlaurence.org or call 281-265-5774. Check out the webpages at <http://stlaurence.org/preschool-cce> or <https://stlaurence.org/clubhouse-10-14>.

HOME STUDY PROGRAM

St Laurence offers a Home Study Program (**Preschool 3-year-old through High School**) to support the parent's who are the first and best teachers of the faith for their children. Parents who register for the Home Study Program are provided with resources and support to assist them in teaching their children and passing on the faith at home. Children in our Home Study Program are always invited and strongly encouraged to participate in the group activities of our Faith Formation programs such as family Masses, Prayer Services or middle school EDGE Nights or high school socials.

Families learn to intentionally share their faith and will grow deeper in their faith together. That is the greatest benefit to the Home Study Program for families who are committed to its process. Families teaching their children in the Home Study Program have found an additional benefit is the flexibility of teaching at your own pace and on their own family's schedule. It is also a great chance for families to join together and form a home study group of similar ages or within a neighborhood. The possibilities for growth of your children in their faith is endless with the deeper integration of faith formation within your family's daily life.

Requirements to Complete:

- 1) Attend the Home Study Parent Orientation to kick off the year in September.
- 2) Complete weekly lessons at home.
- 3) Attend four Enrichment Sessions/Homework Checkpoints scheduled throughout the year.

How to Receive Credit:

To receive credit for the year, you will need to bring your child's textbook to each enrichment session in order to show progress that has been made since the last meeting. Feel free to either work through the textbook activities, complete chapter reviews on-line or complete and bring/take pictures of crafts, projects, etc. that you have done at home as part of your child's lessons.

Important Notice on Receiving Credit: Since there is no weekly attendance to track formation for your child, it is essential that the textbook lessons are completed as well as parental attendance at the enrichment sessions confirmed in order to receive credit for completing the Home Study Program year of formation.

Full completion of the Home Study Program is required, particularly if it is being completed in the year just prior to sacramental preparation or during the year of sacrament preparation. Losing credit for the formation year may lead to a delay in celebrating the sacraments. Please be in communication with the grade-level coordinator if you cannot attend the parent enrichment session and we will provide an opportunity for making up the session.

For more information, contact the Faith Formation Staff at 281-265-5774.

Health, Safety and Environment POLICY and PROCEDURES

1. Statement of Purpose and Scope

As a point of clarification, catechists in this document refer to all catechists, core team, or program facilitators for Faith Formation programs.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The primary goal of this manual is to manage and provide for the safety and security of the St. Laurence Faith Formation children, staff, volunteers, and visitors. At the beginning of each Faith Formation year, all St. Laurence employees and volunteers should become familiar with the Faith Formation's general crisis procedures and be reminded of their individual responsibilities. Copies of this manual will be provided in all catechist handbooks and a copy will be found in the main office.

Parents and catechists are expected to be aware of the policies and procedures of the Faith Formation programs.

SCOPE

St. Laurence Catholic Church is a welcoming and caring community. Our belief in the sacredness of life extends beyond the spiritual well being of each individual to include emotional and physical well being. In order to provide a safe and healthy environment for those involved with the St. Laurence Faith Formation Program, this Health, Safety and Environment Policy and Procedures document has been developed. Although every circumstance cannot be anticipated in advance, these policies and procedures should provide the basic guidance to maintain a safe and healthy environment and to handle emergencies as they arise.

2. Health

2.1 General

The health of each child, adolescent and adult involved with programs at St. Laurence Catholic Church is important to the staff and catechists. If any individual has a medical condition or other health issue that may create a medical emergency or a health risk to other individuals, we ask that this information be shared with the staff. We respect the privacy and dignity of all individuals and will limit that information to those staff members and catechists who need to know this information.

2.2 Immunizations and Contagious Diseases

It is expected that each child enrolled be current with all immunizations. If an individual in any classroom setting is diagnosed with a serious contagious disease (tuberculosis, meningitis, etc.), which may pose a serious health risk to others, all parents will be notified in a timely manner.

2.3 Illnesses

We are asking parents to respect the health and well being of other individuals in the program and refrain from sending children with fever, nausea, conjunctivitis (pink eye) and other minor contagious infections to class. Anyone attending a St. Laurence Faith Formation program must be fever free for 24 hours without medication. Fever is defined as body temperature of 100.4° or above. If a child develops symptoms of illness during class, the parents will be notified immediately and the child MUST be picked up.

2.4 Medications

It is the policy of St. Laurence Faith Formation NOT to administer any medications to any children enrolled in any program. If the child needs routine medications, they should be administered before or after class. If a child is required to carry and use prescription medications, the Program Coordinator and the child's catechist must be informed accordingly and a parent must remain on site to administer the medicine to the child.

2.5 Drug and Alcohol Abuse

If any individual is suspected of drug or alcohol abuse, immediate notification will be made to the Program Coordinators who will notify the Director of the Religious Education and the Parish Administrator. If the individual is deemed to be a hazard to themselves or others, parents will be called to pick up the child and legal authorities will be notified, if necessary. Disciplinary action for drug and alcohol abuse will include notification of parents or guardians, and may involve suspension or expulsion from the program. There is a zero tolerance policy for possession of illicit and illegal drugs on St. Laurence Catholic Church property.

2.6 Child Protection

Child abuse is a serious concern. Any staff member or catechist who suspects a child to be the victim of child abuse will notify Child Protective Services and/or local authorities. The reporting adult should also notify the Program Coordinator who will notify the Director of Faith Formation and the Parish Administrator. Additional follow up will be determined in consultation with Archdiocesan staff.

All staff members and catechists are required to attend an online Safe Haven training class (Safe Environment Training for Adults). After five years a refresher course must be attended by all staff and volunteers in regular, consistent contact with children. Staff members and catechists are also required to have a Criminal Background check. Volunteers must sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct and complete an application for volunteer service which includes references. All staff members are required to sign an acknowledgment that they have read and understood the Ethical and Personal Conduct Policies of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

2.6.1 Suicide/Self-Injury Intervention

Should a catechist become aware of a situation where a child may be contemplating suicide or inflicting injury to himself or herself, **the catechist must bring the child directly to the office of the Program Coordinator.**

The parent(s) must be called immediately, proper documentation must be made and the pastor will be notified.

AT NO TIME IS THE CHILD TO BE LEFT UNATTENDED BY AN ADULT OR ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE PREMISES UNTIL THE PARENT(S) ARRIVE.

When the parent(s) arrive, they are briefed about the incident and/or reason for concern. The child is then released to the parent(s) care. The names and telephone numbers for counselors and other appropriate assistance groups should be given to the parent(s) before they leave.

For administrative records a detailed memo describing the incident should be kept in a confidential file. The Program Coordinator may follow up with the parent(s), but there is no legal obligation to do so.

2.7 Behavior

All participants are expected to behave in an age-appropriate manner and show respect for the staff, volunteer catechists and fellow participants. Behavior that is disruptive, disrespectful, malicious and/or dangerous will not be tolerated. Discipline for such

behavior may include counseling with program directors, joint meetings with parents and the child, suspension or expulsion depending on the severity of offense and the individual's attitude and receptiveness to counseling.

2.7.1 Weapons

No weapons, of any type, are permitted in the buildings of St. Laurence Catholic Church. There is a zero tolerance policy for possession of weapons in St. Laurence Catholic Church buildings with exception of law enforcement personnel.

- If any person is found in possession of a weapon, legal authorities will be notified.
- If the individual is a minor, the parents and the proper authorities will be notified.
- The individual must then receive written permission from the pastor, Director of Faith Formation and Parish Administrator prior to returning.
- If a weapon is found unattended on the premises, the area shall be restricted until authorities intervene.

2.7.2 Communication Devices/Laser Pointers

The use of cellular phones and pagers should be restricted to emergency use only during normal class times. Laser pointing devices are prohibited from operation on campus, except for legitimate presentation purposes.

3. Safety

The safety of all individuals in the Faith Formation Program at St. Laurence is a paramount concern. On such occasions when emergencies arise, personnel in the Faith Formation Program will observe the following guidelines for appropriate action.

3.1 Program Closings/Event Cancellation

The health and safety of children and staff is the main factor in any decision to closure of a program or cancellation of an event.

Program closure/event cancellation notification will be made in the following ways:

- Posted online at www.stlaurence.org
- a recorded voice message will be placed on the Faith Formation main number at 281-265-5774
- if possible an email will be sent out notifying parents of advance cancellations

The following criteria will be used to determine program closure/event cancellation.

As a general rule, St. Laurence Faith Formation program/sessions will follow Fort Bend ISD closures unless specifically notified that the program/event will be held.

Facility Related

- Conditions/Hazards which impact the health and safety of children and/or employees
- Facility without electricity for more than 3 hours
- Facility without water for more than 2 hours.

Weather Related

- Concerns referenced from weather bureau, travel advisory and NOAA.
- Weather conditions such as area flooding, icing, snow accumulations, etc., which would prevent safe arrival and departure of catechists and children.
- Immediate area under a hurricane watch

Health Related

- Area Public Health officials recommend or order closure of the program to reduce spread of illness.

3.2 Crisis Management

A crisis is defined as any event that may disrupt the normal schedule of activities. The following potential crisis situations will be addressed by this policy: fire, injury and natural disaster. Adequate preparation is necessary in the event of an emergency in order to avoid panic, provide the fastest and best response possible, insure that appropriate officials are notified, eliminate any additional hazards, and return to normal operations as soon as possible.

3.3 Notification Procedures for Crisis-

1) CALL 911 - Emergency Response Personnel (Fire, Police, Ambulance)

2) Program Coordinators (typically on site during most events):

281-265-5774

Preschool

Elementary

Middle School (EDGE)

High School (Life Teen)

Confirmation

Susan Mule'

Joan Hastreiter

Cindy Martin

Mike Cleary

Mike Cleary

**Adult/RCIA
First Sacraments/Family Faith
Spiritual Direction
Parish Library**

*Justin Frato
Melissa Calcote
Anne Marie Daniel
Susan Mule'*

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 3) Director of Faith Formation
Christine Dunn | 281-265-5774 |
| 4) Parish Administrator
Tony Oltremari | 281-980-9812 |
| 5) Facilities Manager
Sheila Stulak Office: | 281-980-9812 |
| 6) Clergy | |
| Pastor Fr. Drew Wood | 281-980-9812 |
| Parochial Vicar Fr. Jaison Thomas | 281-265-5774 |
| Parochial Vicar Fr. Truong Son Nguyen | 281-980-9812 |

Non-Emergency Telephone Numbers:

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| Sugar Land Police | 281-242-2600 |
| Sugar Land Fire | 281-491-0852 |
| Methodist Sugar Land Hospital | 281-274-7000 |
| Memorial Hermann Sugar Land Hospital | 281-725-5000 |
| Texas Poison Control Center | 800-764-7661 |
| St. Laurence Catholic Church Parish Office | 281-980-9812 |

3.4 Emergency Procedures

3.4.1. Fire/Smoke/Explosions

A fire alarm in any of the St. Laurence facilities must be taken seriously. The pre-school through first grade sessions are located on the first floor, close to an exit so that young children can be transported quickly and safely outside.

Fire Alarm/Drill Procedures:

- 1) Catechists must familiarize themselves with the nearest fire pull and fire extinguisher to their classroom. In each room a map is posted that details the primary and alternate exit routes and gathering place outside the building.
- 2) When a fire alarm sounds, catechists must gather their children and lead them in an orderly manner, single-file to the designated gathering point.
- 3) Catechists are expected to carry the class attendance sheet and a flashlight with them at all times during the evacuation.

- 4) Catechists should be the last ones out of the room, being certain all children have been evacuated. Children are expected to remain quiet and move quickly out of the building.
- 5) In the event that the primary exit route is blocked by smoke or fire, catechists should select the alternate exit route indicated on the room map keeping all children together and calm.
- 6) The Program Coordinator will verify all rooms and bathrooms are vacated.
- 7) Everyone must remain outside of building until an "All Clear" signal is given by fire department personnel or staff during a drill.

STANDARD EVACUATION ROUTES

Ave Maria Center First Floor:

- Rooms 100, 101, 110, 113 & 114 – exit back(SOUTH) door of classroom area and gather along the fence line closest to Colony Park
- Rooms 102, 103, 104, 105, 106 & 107 will exit the side (WEST) door and gather in the parking spaces just outside
- Rooms 108, 109, 111 & 112 will exit through the playground (WEST) door and gather in the parking spaces just outside
- Marian Hall, Guardian Angel Hall, Library, Oratory, Coffeehouse, and RE Staff Offices – exit the nearest front (NORTH) door and gather at front of the covered driveway

•

Ave Maria Center Second Floor

- St Anne, St Joseph, St Clare, St Joseph, and Spiritual Direction rooms – head down the designated main front (NORTH) stairs, out the front door and gather at front of the covered driveway
- Youth Hall – head down the left (WEST) side stairway and gather in the parking spaces just outside
- Rooms 200, 201, 202, & 203 – head down the main front (NORTH) right stairway, out the front door and gather at front of the covered driveway
- Rooms 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210 & 211 head down the right side (EAST) stairway and gather in the parking spaces just outside
- Rooms 212, 213 & 214 – head down the main front (NORTH) left stairway, out the front door and gather at front of the covered driveway

Note: All stairwell traffic flows TWO LANES DOWN during evacuation.

3.4.2 Injury, Trauma, or Other Medical Emergency

Procedures for the First Responder to a Crisis Situation:

In the event that any child, catechist, visitor or staff member sustains an injury or requires emergency medical treatment, the following procedure should be followed by the first responder:

- 1) Have a responsible adult remain with the injured individual, while sending another for help. Never leave a class unattended. Combine two classes together, if necessary.
- 2) Assess life/safety issues immediately
- 3) Immediately call 911 and request an ambulance be routed to the appropriate location. **It is very important to tell the emergency response units your exact location and when feasible that you call from a land line to help emergency personnel in tracking of location: St. Laurence Ave Maria Center 3103 Sweetwater Blvd 77479**
- 4) Control the scene and the crowd; make sure any hazard has been eliminated.
- 5) If qualified to do so administer first aid as necessary. A first aid kit is available. Staff are trained in First Aid/CPR.
- 6) Have a responsible adult meet the ambulance and direct the emergency personnel to the scene.
- 7) Follow the notification procedures in 3.3

After the initial emergency response has been addressed, parents of the affected child(ren) will be notified, **per the phone listing on the registration form.**

In the event that the emergency will impact other facilities of St. Laurence Catholic Church, such as the church offices, school etc., then those groups should be notified as well.

3.4.3 Weather Watch/Warning

Before Program Begins

- If a weather warning/watch is issued, a decision will be made by administration regarding the cancellation of program and notification will be given through the above listed procedures as listed in 3.1.

During Program

- Participants follow weather watch evacuation procedure listed below.

AVE MARIA CENTER DOWNSTAIRS ROOMS	EVACUATES TO:
100	Hallway outside of 108
101	Hallway outside of 108
102	Room 108
103	Room 108
104	Room 108
105	Room 110
106	Room 110
107	Room 110
108	Stays in 108
109	Stays in 109
110	Stay in 110
111	Room 109
112	Room 110
113	Stay in 113
114	Room 113
Marian Hall	Parish Library, Oratory, RE Staff Workroom
Guardian Angels Hall	Hallway just inside classroom area
Oratory	Stay in Oratory
Library	Stay in Library
Faith Formation Staff Offices	Conference Room
Lobby & Coffeehouse	Parish Library
Kitchen	Parish Library

AVE MARIA CENTER UPSTAIRS ROOMS	EVACUATES TO:
St Anne	St Joseph
St Joseph	Stays in St Joseph
St Clare	St Joseph
St Francis	St Joseph
Spiritual Direction Rooms	St Joseph
Youth Hall	Hallway just leading to Youth Hall
200	Room 201
201	Stay in 201
202	Room 201
203	Room 204
204	Stays in 204
205	Room 206
206	Stays in 206
207	Room 206
208	Stays in 208
209	Room 208
210	Stays in 210
211	Room 210
212	Room 214
213	Room 214
214	Stays in 214

Weather Watch/Warning Procedures

In the event a weather emergency (hurricane, tornado, massive flooding, etc.) occurs during the hours when children are in class, catechists will be warned (if possible) of the approaching danger.

- 1) For weather watch/warning, children and catechists will be asked to move to the center of the building away from windows on to the following rooms listed before in the chart.
- 2) All assume the "Duck and Cover" position. To assume the "Duck and Cover" position kneel with head against the wall and bend forward placing both hands on head.
- 3) Catechists and children remain in duck and cover until notified of "All Clear" by authorized personnel.

3.4.4 Shut Down Procedure (to be used in the classroom during a crisis on campus when evacuation is not possible):

In the event of a dangerous or toxic chemical release as notified by emergency authorities or an intruder on campus, Faith Formation will follow our "Shut Down" procedures.

- 1) Everyone in hallways and restrooms must return to their classroom unless instructed to remain where you are.
- 2) Roll is taken and catechists alert their Program Coordinator of any missing children. Catechists will keep at all times with them their class attendance list.
- 3) Staff will check hallways, bathrooms, etc. for unaccounted children during drills.
- 4) The catechist locks door, turns off lights and closes blinds.
- 5) We will remain there until given the "all clear" by the emergency authorities. Staff will shut down air conditioning and lock exterior doors. Windows will be kept closed and outside doors will remain locked for the duration of the "Shut Down".

Parents please take note: Children will not be dropped off or picked up during "Shut Down". Doors will remain locked until local emergency authorities give the "All Clear" signal.

3.4.5 Emergency Response in the Classroom

In the event that an emergency happens in the classroom, the catechist must communicate the situation in one of the following methods-

- 1) Use the intercom in your classroom to communicate event to front office assistant who will notify the program coordinator to assist you.
- 2) Using personal cell phone or phone located in classroom to call the main RE number at 281-265-5774 and the receptionist will notify the program coordinator
- 3) Send co-catechist/assistant down to get help and to notify of situation, do not leave class unattended.
- 4) Locate a classroom nearby that has an two adults in room to receive help
- 5) Contact the hallway monitor (if applicable for the program)

3.4.6 Bomb Threat

- 1) The person receiving the bomb threat reports the information to the program coordinators who initiate a 911 call.
- 2) STAY CALM! Do everything possible to keep the environment calm.
- 3) Evacuate the building immediately. Walk away from the building as quickly as possible and remain at least 300 feet away from building. Never re-enter the building to retrieve any item.
- 4) If threat is specific to school building, evacuate to St. Laurence Parish Hall. If specific to Parish Courtyard, evaluate to the Main School Building.
- 5) Follow all directives of Emergency Personnel. Do not touch or approach a bomb or suspicious device, which is us something out of place, such as an unattended briefcase leaning against the outside of the building.

The children can be released to the parent or guardian, their normal carpool, or any individuals on their emergency contact information. Each child must be signed out before they can leave.

4. Environment

4.1 Facilities

The facilities at the St. Laurence Catholic Church have been designed and constructed to offer a safe, climate controlled environment for the instruction of both large and small classes. The buildings have emergency lighting during power outages. While these facilities are designed to be as safe as possible, it is still possible for hazards to exist. Each staff member and catechist needs to be vigilant in identifying any potential danger and making the Program Coordinators aware, so that those situations can be remedied.

4.1.1 Hazard Identification and Reporting

If any individual identifies a hazard that may cause immediate danger to the safety of anyone such as water on the floors, electrical hazard, overhead (falling) objects, etc., that person should immediately secure the surrounding area and notify a staff member. The staff member will notify the maintenance staff and remain at the hazardous scene until the situation is remedied by the maintenance staff. Staff members all need to be aware of where the main cutoffs (electric, water and gas) are in each building and be prepared to shut them down.

4.1.2 Orientation and Postings

All staff and catechists are required to familiarize themselves with the building layout and where the primary and alternate escape routes are from their classrooms as well as areas of responsibility. In addition, they must be aware of the gathering points outside, so that all persons in their control are quickly accounted for in an emergency. Each catechist must carry a copy of their class list/attendance sheet. The catechists and staff must also know the location of the nearest fire alarm and fire extinguisher.

Primary and secondary escape route maps are posted in each room. Names and numbers for emergency notification are posted by the phones in each building.

4.1.3 Security

Security of our children is a primary concern, and we must be cautious before releasing children to any person. We need to report any activity that may seem suspicious or out-of-place on the grounds. It is better to be over cautious than to regret not having taken sufficient security measures.

It is everyone's responsibility to politely question anyone on campus who appears not to be part of the St. Laurence Faith Formation program.

4.1.3.1 Child Check-in and Release

All children who are brought to a Faith Formation program must be picked up by their parent, guardian or other person specifically authorized by the legal guardian to do so. Any changes in the regular pickup schedule must be submitted in writing to the catechist or program coordinator in advance.

4.1.3.2 Visitor Check-in at Office

All parents and visitors must check-in with the Front Office Assistant except during drop off or pick up for a program. Parents are permitted in the classrooms while sessions are being conducted, but the program coordinator or the catechist must be notified. Visitors are not permitted to visit the classrooms. At no time will visitors be left with a child unattended.

4.1.3.3 Leaving Children Unattended

No child will be left unattended at St. Laurence. In the event of an emergency in a classroom, the catechist will combine the class **with another class** until the emergency is resolved. All catechists must remain with their children until the last one is picked up. If a child has not been pickup up after sessions dismiss, please bring child to the Program Coordinator so that the parent can be notified. Parents who do not pick up their children on time will be counseled. Repeat offenses could result in their child's termination from the program.

4.1.3.4 Intruder on Campus

In the event of an intruder on campus, the following procedure will be followed:

- 1) Notify front office assistant and/or program coordinator
- 2) Lock doors and initiate the Shut Down procedure listed in 3.4.4 if deemed necessary and building to remain shut down until "all clear" is given
- 3) Coordinator will notify proper authorities.

4.2 Mobility

The location of the Faith Formation programs presents a normal risk of parking lot safety. Please use care within the parking lot and keep all children close to you to prevent any accidents.

4.2.1 Street Crossing

If limited parking availability at church requires parking across the street on the main church campus vigilance is required in crossing the street. **All persons are required to cross the street at the marked pedestrian crossing at the intersection.** The light at the intersection controls both vehicle and pedestrian traffic, although care must still be taken for cars turning right on red, etc. **Jaywalking across the median is dangerous and is strictly forbidden.**

4.2.2 Parking Lot Safety

All parent and youth drivers are expected to use the utmost care when driving through the St. Laurence parking lots. This facility has many children and they may dart out at any time. Drivers that speed through the lot and drive in a manner that endangers the life of any persons will be counseled. For programs that have traffic flow policies, these policies will be strictly enforced to ensure safety of all.

Drop-off/Pick-up Procedure

Traffic flow pattern

For EDGE program that uses a carpool, you must enter **only from Austin Parkway** and follow the snaking around pattern within the parking lot to ensure we limit the number of cars that back up onto the main road. During carpool, children can only be loaded under the overhang of the Ave Maria Center to ensure safety of children not walking in front of the carpool line to find their parents car.

Drop off/Pick up Procedures

All traffic is encouraged to enter via Austin Parkway to enter the parking lot. Traffic may enter through Sweetwater except during the carpool times for Wednesday night EDGE when the only entrance is the Austin Parkway entrance. Colony Park drive is an exit only and is **NOT** an entrance into the Ave Marie Center.

- **Preschool** children are to be accompanied by at least one parent to the designated meeting room. This is a parent/child program so children remain with their parents.
- **Elementary (Kinder – 5th grade) children** must be escorted into the Marian Hall and picked up and signed out in their designated Ave Maria classrooms.
- **EDGE youth (6th - 8th grade)** are dropped off and picked up at the covered entrance to the AMC following the EDGE carpool policy.
- **LIFE TEEN / CONFIRMATION (9th – 12th grade)** youth are dropped off and picked up or can park in the Ave Maria Center parking lot.

4.2.4 Transporting Children

It is the policy of St. Laurence that staff and catechists WILL NOT transport children in their personal vehicles. In the event of a field trip or other off-site activity, parents will be asked to sign a waiver permitting such transport.

Very little control can be exercised with the high school youth regarding accepting rides home from friends. We ask all youth to be respectful to their parents and seek permission to do so, but St. Laurence Catholic Church cannot be responsible for the actions of these youth.

5. Applicability

The policies and procedures detailed in this handbook apply to all individuals involved with any program (staff, catechists, parents, visitors, and children) at St. Laurence Catholic Church.

6. Authority

This handbook is administered under the authority of the Pastor of St. Laurence Parish, who is directly responsible to the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Any deviations from this policy must be approved by the Pastor or his designates in this matter. The Church may be contacted at:

St. Laurence Catholic Church
3100 Sweetwater Boulevard
Sugar Land, TX 77479
281-980-9812

7. Referenced Documents

Policies of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, September 1997.

Policy 590.2 Drug and Alcohol Awareness

Policy 641.32 Criminal Background Check

Policy 655.2 Release of Students to (Managing Conservator) Legal Guardian

Guidelines for the St. Laurence Catholic Church Board of Religious Education.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), First Image Books Edition, April 1995.

St. Laurence Catholic School, Crisis Management Manual, School Year 2015-16