



# **Sacred Heart Parish**

**Children's Faith Formation**

**Handbook**

**CFF Office (530) 365-8573 ext. 14**

This handbook is meant to provide you, the parent/guardian, with helpful information on how we intend to go about partnering with you, to assist in the faith formation of your child/ren. It is our goal to keep parents informed. Therefore, when and if changes are made to this handbook, parents will be notified in writing.

**Sacred Heart Parish Mission Statement:**

The parish is, first, a people. Simply stated, it is a people called together by God. It is a people empowered by the Spirit to make increasingly true and obvious their response to God through Christ. The parish takes shape in this context of faith and prayer, always with openness to the Spirit.

**CFF Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Sacred Heart Children's Faith Formation, a faith family, is to enable our children to carry on their Catholic faith with joy and confidence as disciples and witnesses of Jesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**Curriculum:**

We use a variety of materials and curriculum, from Dynamic Catholic, Loyola Press, and RCL Benziger. Please ask your child's catechist to share the student book with you.

**Attendance:**

We encourage students to participate in a lifelong process of faith formation.

Our attendance policy is directed by the guidelines set for the Parish CFF Program by the Diocese of Sacramento. These guidelines should be met in order for participants to celebrate their Sacraments; therefore, attendance will be recorded at ALL events. Partial attendance may be considered non-attendance. Regular and routine attendance is expected of all children registered for classes.

Attendance is the responsibility of the parents. We ask that parents respect the timing of the classes and not continually pick up children early or arrive late because of other activities they may be involved in. Please establish CFF as a top priority! Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, Masses, retreats and family events. Arrive on time, but not more than 15 minutes before class begins. There will be no supervision prior to that time.

Please note: excessive absences may affect your student's status within the program. If a participant is going to be absent: it is the participant's or participant's parent's responsibility to contact, the Faith Formation Office. A reason for the absence must be stated in the message or voice mail.

Parents with students in sacramental preparation programs are responsible for attending parent meetings, which provide you with both adult education and information about the sacrament and its celebration.

These guidelines allow 3 excused absences for the academic year. Your child has a limited number of hours in the classroom, approximately 32 hours a year. Please help your child have good attendance.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. If your child is absent, please call the CFF office stating the reason for absence. If your child has more than 3 unexcused absences,

you will be required to meet with the Coordinator, Renae Magaña to discuss the absences. If poor attendance continues to be an issue, your child may be dropped from the class and instructed in a home-school format with full support and guidance from the CFF Coordinator.

### **Drop Off and Pick Up:**

Please do NOT drop off children in the parking lot or leave children unattended. Parents must accompany their children to and from the Parish Center. If your child's catechist is not there, please wait until the catechist arrives. In addition, parents need to sign their child in and out of class.

### **Registration Process:**

Family registration is required yearly. We encourage and reward early registration with an Early Bird Discount; if you return your child's registration before August 31<sup>st</sup>. Registrations after the first week of September, will be considered late!

Orientation meetings, registration dates and location will be posted in the Church Bulletin.

Registration is done on a first come first served basis; the registration packets, received at orientation meetings, must be completed and submitted with tuition fee and a copy of child's Baptismal certificate.

New students enrolling for the first time are asked to provide a copy of birth certificate, and an updated Baptismal certificate with all sacraments received, recorded and up to date.

In the event of financial hardship, scholarships are available upon request; details will be discussed on an individual basis. A Payment Plan is also a possibility. However, initial down payment will be required, followed by monthly payments, details will be discussed on an individual basis. We do not have a Refund Policy.

### **Classroom Behavior:**

Good behavior by the student is expected while in class. If a student's behavior is continually disruptive to the class after being corrected by the teacher, the student will be removed from class to the CFF Office. If the behavior persists, the parents will be called. Most behavior problems can be corrected through the cooperative efforts of the catechist, parents, and staff.

### **Sacrament Preparation:**

Students may participate in a parish based program, Catholic School, an approved homeschooling program, or any combination of the fore mentioned. The best preparation parents can give their child is to practice and live the faith. One of the most important ways to do this is regular attendance at Mass. An integral part of our child's faith formation is participation in Sunday Liturgy. While completing the sacrament lessons and attending Faith Formation class is important for the practical knowledge that is learned, faith should also be experienced. To be part of the parish family, to worship together each Sunday is to be part of faith in action. Parents, we expect that you will give your child these experiences – preparing for the sacraments at home, attendance at Faith Formation and Church – so that he/she will be encouraged to practice and live his/her faith.

**First Reconciliation:** This is an important year in your child's faith formation as they learn more about God's love, mercy and forgiveness. Students must be at least 7 years of age and participate in two consecutive years of faith formation prior to receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Please check the CFF Calendar and plan to join us for parent meetings and any event having to do with Sacrament Preparation.

Parents and sponsors are invited to attend the Reconciliation retreat. You will receive more information at a later date.

As parents, you are the first teachers of your children in the ways of faith. Attending these sessions reinforces your commitment to your child's faith formation. We can also support that process by attending Mass each and every Sunday and nurturing their faith by example.

**First Holy Eucharist:** Jesus invites us to the table in the breaking of the Bread. For the administration of the Most Holy Eucharist to children, it is required that they have 1) sufficient knowledge, 2) careful preparation, 3) understand the Mystery of Christ according to their capacity and are 4) able to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Body of Christ with faith and devotion. Please check the CFF Calendar and plan to join us for parent meetings and any event having to do with Sacrament Preparation of First Holy Eucharist.

**Confirmation:** Confirmation completes the grace of baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which seals and confirms the baptized in union with Christ and calls them to a greater participation in the worship and apostolic life of the Church.

Confirmation is only to be received after the child makes the decision to be confirmed.

Students must be at least 12 years of age upon registration of the first year of preparation.

At Bishop Soto's request, Sacred Heart Parish, considered to be one of the smaller parishes, has agreed to retain the practice of Confirmation every two years. Please check the CFF Calendar and plan to join us for parent meetings and any event having to do with Sacrament of Confirmation. All Confirmation candidates are expected to complete at least 10 hours of community service and social justice work: 5 hours of Parish Service and 5 hours of Community Service/Social Justice.

## **Overall Expectations**

Students will:

- at all times show respect.
- be cooperative with adults and other students.
- actively participate in classroom activities and discussions.
- attend class regularly and complete any assignments or homework.
- follow the code of conduct: Respect for God, yourself, one another, your catechist & others property.
- follow the rules and consequences developed and or posted in each classroom.
- not use a cell phone during class, unless they have the permission and approval of the catechist.

Parents will:

- worship with family on a regular basis.
- be actively involved in the preparation of the Confirmation Candidate.
- encourage student.
- pray for the student.
- support and encourage the completion of assignments, projects and all expectations as listed.
- participate in all meetings and classes that are planned for parents.

Catechists will:

- provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the learning environment so all children will be able to grow in their faith.
- prepare and teach designated approved curriculum.
- be a Christian role model and attend Mass weekly.
- be present at least 15 minutes before the start of your class to meet and pray with CFF Team.
- attend and complete SAFE ENVIRONMENT training as mandated by the Diocese of Sacramento.
- attend Team meetings and trainings held throughout the year.
- communicate regularly with and involve the parents in the faith development of their children.
- report to the coordinator immediately any activity that is considered harmful.

Catechetical Volunteers will:

- attend and complete SAFE ENVIRONMENT training as mandated by the Diocese of Sacramento.
- be attentive and aware of the children and the environment at all times.
- report immediately any activity that is considered harmful.
- follow the guidelines as prepared for each volunteer position.
- maintain a level of confidentiality with any information that is to be held within the program.
- be timely when you are helping out.

## Sacred Heart Parish Children's Faith Formation Program Handbook

I have read the CFF Handbook, discussed it with my child and agree to the above expectations and activities for parents and children of the Sacred Heart Parish, Children's Faith Formation Program.

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Student\_\_\_\_\_

Parent\_\_\_\_\_