

THINKING ABOUT STEWARDSHIP

We, as Catholics, give to the Lord because we are grateful. The giving of ourselves in totality - body, mind, spirit, talents, time and material resources - is our way of expressing our thankfulness to God for all that we have. Responding to the immeasurable love and grace of God, dedicated Catholics open their hearts and hands toward God in a spirit of appreciation and love.

This teaching ministry may be achieved by VOLUNTEERING as

1. Classroom Catechist or Co-Catechist
2. Catechist's Aide or Helper
3. Substitute Catechist

REQUIRED: All volunteers **MUST** complete the VIRTUS online Program (Protecting God's Children) provided by the Archdiocese of Hartford and fill out a background check before anyone can begin work in our program.

If you are interested in sharing your time and talent with our youth in this ministry, please call the office to speak with Roxy at 860-283-5817 or email me at roxy@stmkp.org.



Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish Faith Formation Program Policy and Procedures



Jesus said, "Let the children come unto me"

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish Office of Faith Formation to educate the children and adults of this parish in the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church so that we can live our faith and follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Faith Formation Policies and Procedures for Parents and Students

Welcome

Please take a few minutes to review the Parent and Student Policies and Procedures Handbook. It is very important that you read, understand and agree to the Faith Formation Policies and Procedures included in the handbook and have discussed them with your child. You and your child agree to do what the program asks of you.

Additional registration forms can be downloaded from our web site at
stmkp.org; Faith Formation tab in header

The Office of Faith Formation

The Office of Faith Formation is located in the Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish office in the St. Thomas school building.

Meetings with the Faith Formation Coordinator, Roxy Fainer, can be made by appointment. Her contact information is listed below.

Faith Formation Office
Phone.....860-283-5817 ext. 101
Email.....roxy@stmkp.org

Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish Website: www.stmkp.org

Safety and Health

- In case of a fire, each catechist has a plan for the safe evacuation of their classroom and building. Students will be informed of the plan at the beginning of the school year.
- Please be sure to fill out the student “Medical Information” section of the registration form, including any medical conditions, allergies or learning impairments, so that our staff and catechist can be notified.
- The Faith Formation curriculum includes a program called VIRTUS. This teaches our children age-appropriate personal safety. It is introduced in first grade and continues to be taught every year. It is required by the Archdiocese of Hartford.
- Saint Maximilian Kolbe Faith Formation program will be **“food free”**. This means that there will be **NO food, gum, or candy allowed during regularly scheduled classes. Stickers, pencils or any non-food items are always welcome.**

Child Abuse/Safe Environment Program VIRTUS - Protecting God’s Children

Child abuse is a serious concern. Consistent with diocesan policy and local legal codes, the parish catechetical staff has a moral and legal duty to comply with the law to ensure the welfare of all children. Pursuant to state law, we are required to report suspected child abuse, and we will also follow diocesan policy on such matters.

Volunteers

Our Faith Formation Program runs with the help of dedicated volunteers. To ensure its continued success, we need an adequate number of Faith Formation Catechists and aides. Volunteers are the ***backbone*** of our program. **The requirements are: you must be a practicing Catholic, in good standing in the Church, attend VIRTUS training** (Protecting God’s Children) and **submit a background check form before** beginning in this ministry. Training and teaching materials needed will be provided to anyone interested.

Discipline

Our program is offered in a school setting. Even in the best circumstances, very few hours of classroom instruction are given each year. **Misbehavior will not be tolerated.** Running, sliding and general horseplay is not appropriate behavior and will not be allowed.

Catechists will instruct the students on the classroom rules and behavior expectations on the first day of class. Each time a student misbehaves, the catechist will remind the student of the rules. Upon a **third** warning, the student will be sent to the coordinator's office. Students that are sent to the office **two times** will be removed from class until the coordinator has a meeting with the parents. If after this meeting, the misbehavior still occurs, the parents, coordinator and the Pastor will meet to resolve the problem.

Attendance Policy

It is required that students attend all classes, masses, retreats, special services and service projects. If on a rare occasion, one must be absent from class or another scheduled activity, parents must notify the Faith Formation Office that their child will be absent. If a student misses a class or other scheduled occasions, make up work will be given.



Registration

The registration fees collected help pay for student books, bibles, supplies and other materials needed to run our program.

Registration Fee: **\$45.00/child, \$95.00/Family = 3 or more children.** A census card must be filled out by all families who belong to our parish and is kept on file in the Parish Center. Classes begin in **September.** **Parents of returning students will be notified by email 1 to 2 months before classes begin.** Notification will also be placed on our website under Faith Formation, in our bulletin and on our parish app. You must fill out a registration form for each child you are registering. Please make checks payable to: **Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish (STMKP).**

Please return you forms with all the necessary information completed, along with your registration fees as soon as possible.

Classes are held on Sunday at Saint Thomas School, Thomaston from 8:30 am - 9:45 am for grades K-9.

It is very important that classes start on time. Children should arrive no less than 5 minutes and no more than 10 minutes before classes begin. Times are listed on your registration forms and on our website. **Class times can change from year to year.**

Cancellation of Classes

Please check TV Channels 3, 4, 6, and 8 for Faith Formation class cancellations. If the cancellations are not scrolling on TV, please go to the station website. The websites will post the cancellation notices. A Faith Formation class cancellation **does not cancel church masses.**

Student Books and Bible

Every student receives a textbook in grades K-9. Students are given a Bible in the 6th grade in addition to their textbook.

Please write your child's name, grade, and catechist's name on the inside front cover of the book. This helps us in returning lost books to their rightful owners.

Textbooks and Bibles (for grades 6-9) should be brought to class every week.

Parents

The Roman Catholic Church has taught for centuries that it is primarily the duty of parents to see to the Baptism and education of their children in the faith. As that is a very difficult task due to the many demands put upon people who raise families, parishes have long offered systems to help them. Still, no matter how supportive these systems are, they remain nothing more than aids to help parents in the education of their children. If children learn to pray, if they learn the teachings of their faith, if they love and frequent the sacraments, if they practice Christ's teachings in their lives; it is only because their parents have been faithful to their God given vocation of being a Catholic parent.

Parents who take advantage of the education offered by the parish for their families thereby accept several responsibilities:

- Participate in Sunday Mass and Holy Days with their children. The Roman Catholic Church teaches, and our program teaches, that every Roman Catholic **should attend Sunday Mass.** **If parents do not attend Mass, they confuse their children - not only about the authority of the Church and their catechists regarding Mass attendance, but in other areas as well.**

- Parents will ensure their children's faithful attendance at classes and other activities such as prayer services, retreats and service projects.
- Parents will attend meetings with coordinator before the reception of the sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation. **Attendance at the scheduled parent meeting is required.**

Dropping off and picking up your children

All scheduled activities within the Faith Formation program will begin at the noted times (see schedule). Do not drop off a student without first confirming that there is a Supervisor present.

ALL students must be picked up by a parent or guardian in the designated building area.

Please park your vehicles in the building parking lots, or in a legal side street parking space. **DO NOT PARK IN FRONT OF THE ST. THOMAS GARAGE.** When parking, please park in an orderly fashion, so that cars can come and go easily. Parents should arrive **BEFORE** dismissal so that students can be picked up **PROMPTLY AND SAFELY. PLEASE BE ALERT FOR STUDENTS WALKING TO WAITING CARS.** These policies may change to provide for the safety of our children.

Sacramental Requirements

All requirements for the reception of sacraments **must** be fulfilled at least two weeks prior to the sacramental date. All candidates must be baptized before receiving the following Sacraments:

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is in grade 2.

The Sacrament of First Holy Communion is in grade 2.

The Sacrament of Confirmation is in grades 9 and 10.

All requirements are listed in each Sacramental Handbook. The handbooks will be given out at the appropriate times.