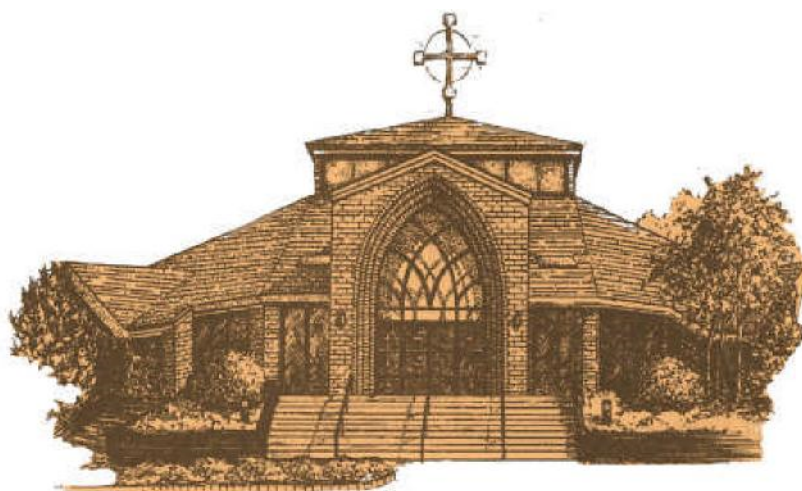


Saint Jude Thaddeus Church

Office of Faith Formation

17 Mount Olive Rd

Budd Lake, NJ 07828



Faith Formation Family Handbook

Fall, 2019

Laurice Bonannella

Director of Faith Formation

973-691-0317

dre@stjudeparish.org

Welcome to the Faith Formation program of St. Jude Parish! We are excited to begin this journey with all of you. Together we will grow in faith as we attend class and celebrate Mass each week. Our program will offer your family many opportunities to come together to worship, serve, and evangelize.

Mission Statement

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." The Faith Formation program of St. Jude will teach your child how to follow this simple request of Jesus. The program will show the children how to live with mercy, compassion, and love in their hearts. We will accomplish this goal by having them actively participate in Mass together with their families. We will offer worship and prayer services which will deepen their faith and allow them to see the face of God in all they encounter.

Faith Formation Class Information

Grades 1-8

Classes are held once a week for Grades 1-4, and bi-weekly for Grades 5-8. Children are assigned classes after registration, fees, and a Baptismal Certificate are submitted.

Sunday Class Schedule

Grades 1-4: 8:30am – 9:45am

Grades 5-8: 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Wednesday Class Schedule

Grades 1-4: 4:30pm – 5:30pm

Grades 5-8: 7:00pm – 8:30pm

Arrival to Class

Children will meet their Catechist in the church each week. **Children should arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before class begins.**

Dismissal from Class

All students will be dismissed from the front entrance of the Parish Center. **Cars will not be permitted in this part of the driveway and parents are asked to meet their child at the appropriate doorway.** This procedure has been implemented for the safety of the children. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation.

Registration and Tuition

Our Faith Formation program is open to parishioners and non-parishioners. Annual registration for new students, as well as returning students, takes place each year during April.

A tuition fee is required to cover the cost of textbooks and materials used in the program, and must be paid at the time of registration. However, finances should never come in the way of a child's participation in our Faith Formation program. Please contact the Office of Faith Formation to discuss any financial hardships.

2019/2020 Fees

Below are the fees for the 2019/2020 school year:

1 child	\$150
2 children	\$225
Family	\$275

GRADE 2 ONLY – Add Sacrament Fee of \$25

Registration Received after April 30, 2019 will incur a \$25.00 late fee

Books

Children in grades 1-8 will be using the *Be My Disciples* series published by RCL Benziger. This program helps the children to grow in knowledge of their faith and live as disciples of Jesus. Children in Grade 2 will also use RCL Benziger's sacramental program for Reconciliation and Eucharist.

Parents

We invite parents to be active in our religious education program and to serve in some area of the program. Volunteers are needed to serve as catechists and aides in the classroom, to assist as safety monitors while classes are in session, and to assist with special events as needed throughout the year. Private tutors are also needed to work with children who may need extra support.

Attendance Policy

We strongly encourage regular attendance at class. Each lesson is designed to help your child learn more about Church teachings and liturgical celebrations, and to reflect on God's Word. The children in our Faith Formation classrooms form a faith community, and guided class discussions are an important part of their faith journey.

If a student will be absent from class, parents are required to notify the Faith Formation office by phone or e-mail. Please assist your child in making up the missed work, which should be given to your child's catechist at the beginning of class. If there are more than

four (4) absences, your child may need to meet with the Director for additional work, or may be required to repeat the year. Please notify the Faith Formation office if there will be a long term absence due to a serious illness or family emergency.

Progress Reports

Assessment of your child's progress may include written and oral tests, or informal assessments such as completion of projects or participation in class discussions or activities. Each child will receive a progress report in January and at the end of the school year.

ACRE Survey

The Assessment of Catholic Religious Education (ACRE) is a survey instrument developed by the National Catholic Educational Association. The survey checks the student's knowledge of Catholic beliefs and practices. This assessment will help us to restructure our curriculum based upon the needs of the children. This survey will be administered to students in Grades 5, 8, and 10.

Emergency Closings

We follow the Mt. Olive Township School District for weather related closings. St. Jude's Faith Formation classes **are canceled** when the Mt. Olive Township Schools:

- **Have an early dismissal**
- **Are closed for the day**
- **Are open for the day but have canceled after-school activities**

If you are unsure whether classes will be held, please call the Faith Formation office at 973-691-0317.

Food and Allergies

There are a growing number of students with food allergies that may be life threatening. Parents must indicate any food allergies on the registration form. Children should not bring food into the Parish Center during Faith Formation classes.

Student Behavior Code

Students attending Faith Formation classes are expected to show respect for each other and for the catechists and other adults who volunteer their time and talents to our program. Students are also expected to show respect for church property.

If a child is having difficulty following the rules, the catechist will first speak with the child, and may phone parents to discuss the problem. If disrespectful behavior or other inappropriate conduct persists, the matter will be referred to the Coordinator. A meeting may then be held with the Catechist, parent(s), and the Coordinator to address the issue.

Hand-Held Electronic Devices - All hand-held electronic devices including, but not limited to, cell phones, iPod's, palm pilots, mp3 players, portable compact disc players, tape recorders, etc., should not be used during any part of the Faith Formation Program.

Students should not bring electronic devices into the Parish Center. If a student carries a cell phone, it must be **turned off** and **put away** prior to entering the building. Cell phones that are not out of sight and touch will be taken and returned at dismissal.

Policies Mandated by the Diocese of Paterson

- There will be zero tolerance for disrespect, violent or abusive behavior of any type. Bullying in particular will not be tolerated.
- There will be zero tolerance of harassment of any kind, including, but not limited to, verbal harassment, gender bias, threats, sexual harassment, or foul language.
- There will be zero tolerance for substance abuse of any kind, including, but not limited to, drugs, inhalants, alcohol, and tobacco.

For these violations, parents will be called immediately to remove their child. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, the appropriate authorities will be notified.

Sacraments

The sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are normally received in the second year of religious instruction. The diocese requires that a student receive 2 full years of formal religious education in preparation for a sacrament. This includes the sacramental year and the year immediately prior to it.

Parents are encouraged to be active in the formal program, and are required to attend preparation meetings for each sacrament (dates and times to be announced).

First Reconciliation

First Reconciliation will be received prior to First Eucharist and is normally celebrated in the second grade (date and time to be announced). The diocese provides the following guidelines to determine readiness for the sacrament:

The child must have an initial knowledge of:

- a. The person of Jesus
- b. The Gospel message of forgiveness
- c. Sin and its effects
- d. Understanding and experience of sorrow, forgiveness, and conversion

First Eucharist

First Eucharist is normally received in the second grade. First Eucharist will be scheduled at a weekend Mass after Easter (dates and times to be announced).

The diocese provides the following guidelines to determine readiness for the sacrament:

A child according to his/her capacity:

1. Has celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Eucharist.
2. Participates actively and consciously in Sunday Liturgy on a regular basis.
3. Understands that (a) the Eucharist is truly the Body and Blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine, and (b) that the Eucharist is the commemoration of Christ's last meal with his disciples before he died, and a memorial of his sacrifice for our salvation.
4. Understands that by sharing in this special meal, we become brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ on earth.