

Blessed Trinity Cluster
Faith Formation
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
2017-18

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses....to the ends of the earth”. Acts 1:8

VISIONS AND GOALS

We define the purposes of the Faith Formation program as (1) the initiation of the baptized person into the values, doctrine, traditions and discipline of the Catholic faith as this faith is understood by the Catholic Church, and (2) the enabling of adolescents to respond to the call of God through personal commitment and conversion to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, throughout life, especially through their participation in the celebration of the Sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation, and Confirmation.

Our class curriculum and extra-curricular activities are designed to facilitate these purposes with respect for (1) the dignity and freedom of each person and (2) their level of human development (psychological and physical).

THE SPECIFIC GOALS OF OUR PROGRAM ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. That every adolescent and adult will hear the gospel of Jesus Christ (namely that God loves us and He calls us to love Him, ourselves, and one another).
2. To teach the basic teachings of the Roman Catholic Church as outlined in Chapter 5 of the National Catechetical Directory inclusive of the Commandments, Beatitudes, Laws of the Church, Corporal, and Spiritual Works of Mercy.
3. To teach our young people the basics of how to participate in the Catholic life of prayer and worship (i.e. Basic prayers, daily prayers, the Mass, and the Sacraments).
4. To empower our young people to participate as members in the Church by affirming and encouraging their faith and talents.
5. To make use of modern media communications to meet the above goals.

PARENT/STUDENT GUIDELINES

MEDIA NON-PERMISSION FORM

Students in the Blessed Trinity Cluster Faith Formation program may have their art/work/writing/photograph placed on our website, in a newsletter or multimedia production, our Facebook page and Twitter feed, or released to local news media during their enrollment. If for any reason you would not like your students art/work/writing/photograph published in this way, please be sure to indicate this during online registration. A list will be generated for catechists each year.

ATTENDANCE/DIRECTIVES

Student attendance will be recorded and kept on record. Four-year high school attendance in religious education, or three-year attendance with involvement in catechetical ministry during senior year, is required for senior CDA scholarships and certificates.

It is strongly recommended that absences be kept to a minimum during the school year. Students may be held accountable for all work that is missed. The Director of Faith Formation and or/Lead Catechist will exercise judgment concerning the reasonableness of absences and will make the final determination whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

Make-up/Homework Assignments: To maintain the integrity and quality of our faith formation programming, it is expected that student's with a high rate of absences (3 or more) will make the effort to complete any makeup assignments before they advance to the next level of faith formation. Makeup work will be assigned by the teacher/catechist.

There are NO credits or refunds for missed classes. Full tuition is due even if your child is absent or discontinues classes for any reason. This policy of paid absences is necessary since operating costs continue and space is saved for each student.

All afternoon and evening classes for grades 7-12 will be held at the St. Mary Cluster RE Campus. Grades K-6 classes are held at individual parish sites/locations. Occasionally students go off site for service or learning activities which require a special permission form prior to the event.

AFTERNOON/NIGHT CLASSES

St. Patrick Parish, Ryan, student classes (K-6) will be held on Wednesday evenings at St. Patrick from 6:30 -8:00 pm.

St. Mary Parish, Manchester, student classes (K-6) will be held on Wednesday evenings at St Mary School from 6:30 -8:00 pm.

Immaculate Conception, Masonville student classes (K-6) will be held on Wednesday evenings at Immaculate Conception Rectory from 6:30 – 8:00 pm.

Cluster Middle School (7th & 8th) classes will be held on Wednesdays afternoons from 1:40-2:40 and again in the evening from 6:45-8:15 PM.

Cluster High school classes (9-12) classes will be held on Wednesdays afternoons from 1:40-2:40 and again in the evening from 6:45-8:15 PM.

Students in Grades 7-12 should enter using the main Parish Center doors, NOT through St. Mary School. Students must attend the entire class period.

Please schedule work and other activities before or after class time. **Arriving late or leaving early for other activities is considered an unexcused absence.** Please refer to the 2017-18 Class Schedule that is available on the Faith Formation tab of the Cluster website at www.blessedtrinitycluster.com. Please keep in mind these dates are subject to change.

Students will not be permitted to leave class early unless a parent calls or he/she has written permission signed by their parent/guardian and given to the office BEFORE the start of class. All parents/guardians of students are requested to call the Blessed Trinity Cluster office at 927-4710 (8-4 pm) if your student will be absent or late that night; after office hours please call the school office at 927-3689. This call is essential given night travel and the extreme Iowa weather and temperatures. Phone calls will be placed to parents if their child has an unexcused absence.

COMMUNICATION

In our continuing effort to be green, we will e-mail parents/guardians any updates, announcements, or schedule changes during the year. Very little information will be mailed out. Please be sure we have a current e-mail address, as well as home address and telephone number on file.

In the case of children whose parents are divorced or separated, it is our policy to share information with both parents. Please be sure we have the appropriate contact information. In the event that a non-custodial parent is denied access to this information, we must have a court document on file allowing for this restriction.

Follow Us!

‘Like’ us on Facebook to hear the latest news regarding upcoming events, class cancellations, etc.

We want to make it easy for you to stay in touch with us!

www.facebook.com/spsor.btc.re

Twitter @IGNITEdelco

CURRICULUM

Kindergarten: ‘Allelu’ nurtures the natural desire of young children to seek a relationship with God and reinforces a strong sense of community and love. It incorporates hands-on activities, arts, crafts, stories, pictures and dramatic play to keep the children engaged and let them learn in the way that is most natural for them.

1st-6th Grade: ‘Alive in Christ’ offers clear ways to live the Gospel message using images, text, and activities that speak to the child’s experience. Through this process students will understand the treasure that is our faith in a way that has meaning to them.

IGNITE! Catholic Faith Formation for Grades 7-12 Based on Acts 1:8

IGNITE is the Blessed Trinity Cluster's evening faith formation program for middle and high school teens. Acts 1:8 says, 'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be witnesses in Jerusalem, through Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' We are being called by Christ into life-long mission. This is what it means to be Catholic: One, Holy, Catholic & Apostolic. **IGNITE** ensures that faith formation is provided along with helping our teens establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Grades 7 & 8th Curriculum:

'Chosen' by Ascension Press- will take our students on a journey through the entire Catholic faith in all its richness and vitality. Teens will be captivated by the story, from Creation all the way through salvation history, and they will come to see how the sacraments, prayer, and discipleship are the keys to a happy life. The goal of this 24-lesson program is nothing short of winning over the hearts of teens and making them lifelong disciples of Christ.

ALL high school students will follow the same curriculum not only in the cluster but eventually across the archdiocese. The six themes forming the basis of the curriculum are:

#1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture (Fall 2017)

#2 Who Is Jesus Christ? (Spring 2018)

#3 The Mission of Jesus Christ – The Paschal Mystery (Fall 2018)

#4 Jesus Christ's Mission Continues in the Church (Spring 2019)

#5 Sacraments as Privileged Encounter with Jesus Christ (Fall 2019)

#6 Life in Jesus Christ (Spring 2020)

DISCIPLINE

The Catechist and Director of Faith Formation handle normal discipline problems. Please refer to the Behavior Policy at the end of this handbook. All other disciplinary actions will be dealt with as per the Archdiocesan Faith Formation Commission Policy Handbook.

NO CELL PHONES are allowed to be used in classrooms. If the teacher/catechist sees or hears a cell phone, the phone will be taken to the office. The student can get the phone from the on-site supervisor at the end of class. If a cell phone continues to be a problem, parents/guardians shall be contacted. This will be strictly enforced.

POSSESSION OF ANY ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES/ITEMS-items will be confiscated. Parents and authorities will be notified and disciplinary action will be taken.

Student Tuition/Fees:

Grades K-6:	\$50
Grades 7-12:	\$100
Sacramental Fees	\$25 <i>(for First Reconciliation, First Communion & Confirmation)</i>

Out of Cluster K-6 student fee is \$100

Out of Cluster 7-12 student fee is \$200
Out of Cluster Sacramental Fee is \$50

We strongly encourage any family experiencing a financial hardship to contact the Office of Faith Formation for a confidential inquiry at 927-4710. We want all students to be able to attend classes regardless of financial concerns.

PRAYER

Prayer is an integral part of our faith and will be included in each class. Parents, please assist in teaching and praying at home together as well as attending Mass together weekly.

CARE OF SCHOOL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, and furniture supplied by the Office of Faith Formation, as well as respect for the building, grounds, and bus. Students have a responsibility not to damage the personal property of others. Any student who is responsible for damaging personal or school property will be required to pay for the damage done or to replace the item.

RENEWAL/RETREATS/RALLIES

Each year opportunities for retreat/renewal are available for students in Grades 7-12. All students are strongly encouraged to attend one of the renewal experiences. All students in grades 7-12 are invited and encouraged to attend the local, regional or archdiocesan events.

In addition, listed below are other events held annually:

9th/10th -Quest weekend retreat held annually in Cedar Rapids and possibly other sites in the Archdiocese near the end of January.

11th Grade- Students attend the Cluster Confirmation retreat.

12th Grade-TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) Weekends, Saturday 10:00 AM thru Monday 4:00 PM at several different sites and dates. Seniors can choose the weekend that works in their own life and schedule. It is important to register early.

WEATHER CANCELLATION

All Religious Education Classes will be automatically canceled at night if West Delaware School is called off for the day for inclement weather. If inclement weather occurs near the end of the day resulting in cancelation of evening classes, an e-mail and mass text message will be sent out and our Facebook page will be updated. We also encourage you to join the Blessed Trinity Cluster Text Club for alerts and updates. Text to: 36000 Message: H248.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate to their age level and that does not disrupt the school or educational environment. Inappropriate student appearance may cause disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors on school grounds. Students are expected to adhere to reasonable levels of cleanliness and modesty.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Blessed Trinity Cluster expects students to conduct themselves in a manner fitting their age level and maturity. Students are expected to treat catechists, other employees, students, visitors, and guests with respect and courtesy. Students may not use abusive language, profanity, or obscene gestures or language.

Behavior that is disrespectful, rude, or which causes harm to other students or adults, and any other behavior that may be viewed as detrimental to the learning environment of the school will not be tolerated. Students exhibiting such behavior will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action as listed below.

Blessed Trinity Cluster Faith Formation Discipline Policy

We wish to make available to parents in the Blessed Trinity Cluster the following Discipline Policy as it relates to our Faith Formation program. Please read carefully as our catechists will follow this procedure if needed. Thank you.

Procedure:

The student will be given (2) verbal warnings in the classroom setting.

If there are recurrent or serious problems, the student will be dismissed from class and the following procedures will take place.

1. The student will meet with the Director of Faith Formation or Site Supervisor.
2. The student will fill out a discipline form. The student and the Coordinator/Supervisor will agree on appropriate behavior.
3. The student and the Director or/Supervisor will sign the Discipline form. The student will then return to class. After class, the Director/Supervisor will give the form to the catechist to sign and the student will take it home to obtain the parent/guardian signature.
4. The Director/Supervisor will notify the parent(s)/guardian of the disciplinary action.
5. Discipline forms will be filed in the Religious Education Office for the year. When a student has two forms on file, a conference will be held with the parent/guardian, the student, the catechist, and the Director.
6. A mutual agreement will the parties involved may mean a two-week assigned work at home.
7. If, after returning to the classroom, the student is again dismissed from class, the student will not be allowed to attend class for the remainder of the year. An appropriate family religious education plan will be designed for use in the home and monitored by the Director of Faith Formation.