

St. Susanna Parish
Children's Christian
Formation Program
2017-2018

Parent/Student
Handbook
Grades 1 – 8

Church and Parish Office: 616 Reading Rd,
Education Center: 500 Reading Rd.
Mason, Ohio 45040
Website: www.stsusanna.org

Absentee Call in Number: 398-3821 Ext. 3135;
Please leave child's name, session,
teacher & room number

K://Formation Ministries/Children's Formation/CFP Handbook

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Children's Christian Formation Staff

Children's Formation Ministers

Grades 1-8.....Kristen Tell
398-3821 Ext. 3135

Grades 1-4Lauren Winters
398-3821 Ext. 3400

Early Childhood Coordinator.....Jill Berning
398-3821 Ext. 3400

Children's Formation Secretary.....

*Monday thru Friday during regular business hours, staff members are in the Parish Office at the Church. Sunday mornings and Monday evenings during formation sessions, staff members are in the Children's Formation Room in the primary wing of the Education Center in Room #9.

Children's Christian Formation Program Session Times

Session A:
Sunday Mornings from 10:30-11:45 a.m., Grades 1-8

Session B:
Monday Evenings from 6:15-7:30 p.m., Grades 1-8

Home Study Option:
Grades 3-5; Grades 6-7 with permission

Christian Formation Program Philosophy

Christian Faith Formation is the process of spiritual and educational growth. The Children's Christian Formation Program builds the foundation for spiritual growth rooted in the message of Jesus and the process of Faith Formation.

Relationship to Pastoral Council

The Christian Formation Program functions in accord with the directives and goals of St. Susanna's Pastoral Council.

Parish Mission Statement **St. Susanna Catholic Parish** ***A community of faith,*** ***a Church in action***

Strengthened by our unique gifts, we are committed to:

Knowing Christ and His Word

Nourishing faith through prayer and the Sacraments

Respecting and serving all people

Seeking God's presence in our daily lives

Admission Policies

Children are admitted to the Children's Formation Program according to the Policies approved by the Parish Council in March, 1981. There is no discrimination on the basis of race, sex, handicapping condition, or national origin. Age requirements for CFP students will be those of the public school system of the student.

Registration Policies

An Education Commission policy adopted in 1992, requires that registration for the coming year will be held during the Spring. Families must register their children each year to be eligible for the following year's Children's Formation Program. Online Registration can be found on the Parish website.

Non-custodial Parent Rights

The Program Administrator of the Children's Formation Program needs to be informed by the custodial parent of the rights of the non-custodial parent.

New Family Registration Procedures

If you are a new family to St. Susanna Parish, the following steps are needed to complete the Registration process for Early Childhood (Ages 3, 4 & 5) and/or Grades 1-8 Christian Formation Program.

1. REGISTER IN THE PARISH. Call the Parish Office: 398-3821, Ext. 3100 or Register online at the Parish Website
2. Fill out REGISTRATION FORMS from the Parish Website at www.stsusanna.org under Faith Formation, CFP Grades 1-8.
3. Obtain a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate.
4. Obtain copies of certificates of any other Sacrament your child has received.
5. Have pertinent health information and emergency information available.
6. Bring all of this information, along with your checkbook to the Parish Office or you can pay online.

We welcome you, and look forward to meeting you.

Financial Procedures

Tuition

Christian Formation

Program Tuition.....\$120 for 1 child

\$230 for 2 children

\$300 for 3 children (maximum tuition per family)

First Penance/First Communion Materials and Retreat Fee:.....\$50 (CFP)
for Grade 2 and older students receiving First Reconciliation & First Eucharist

Confirmation and Retreat Fee\$25 (CFP)

..... \$70 (High School Program)

Home Study

Faith Formation Tuition.....\$120 per student (\$300 maximum per family)

*Arrangements for payments can be made with the Business Manager.

Refund Policies

Refunds are given to families that move prior to the start of the Children's Formation Program.

Attendance

Perfect attendance is anticipated, expected, and necessary for spiritual growth. Illness cannot be helped. When absence does occur, parents should call Kristen Tell in the Parish Office at 398-3821, Ext. 3135 or if before 4:30 PM on Friday afternoon

e-mail tellk@stsusanna.org or zinneckerl@stsusanna.org, for the child to be excused. When leaving a message or e-mail please indicate the child's name, class time, teacher and room number.

Attendance records are kept on file with the Program Administrator at the Parish

Office. Parents will be contacted if a child has more than three unexcused absences. It is important that parents schedule these sessions for the entire year, and put Christian Formation for their children as a high priority on a weekly basis. Please schedule all extra-curricular events at another time. Families need to make up missed lessons and assignments and give them to the catechist at the next class date. At-Home Parent guides are available at www.loyolapress.com under the Parent/Family tab.

Curriculum

All texts used in the Children's Formation Program, both basic texts, supplemental sacramental texts, and Family Guides are listed on the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Preferred Religion Textbook Program List, which is issued annually.

Early Childhood: 3, 4, 5 year olds (Pre-K) and Kindergarten

The Curriculum and Policies for Early Childhood is described in the Early Childhood Handbook which is available at the Parish Office.

Grades 1-7

The curriculum for children in Grades 1-7 is "Finding God" published by Loyola Press. The philosophy of the "Finding God" program is to cover the full and authentic teachings of the Catholic Church. This program fosters a lived relationship with God through Jesus. A website is available at www.FindingGod.com. Parents and children are encouraged to use it regularly.

Grade 8

The curriculum for children in 8th Grade is "Chosen" published by Ascension Press. "Chosen" is a dynamic approach to Confirmation Preparation. This approach is complimented by Interactive video-based learning that touches on nearly every aspect of our Catholic Faith with a special concentration on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Home Study Faith Formation

Home Study Faith Formation is a viable option for Christian Formation for children. The Home Study program is only for children in grades 3-5 (and Grades 6-7 with permission from the Program Administrator). The program is through Loyola Press, Finding God, and is the same curriculum used for the weekly CFP sessions. The online materials will provide prayer experiences, interactive games and study guides, video correlations, and other activities. Parents will also be provided with family activities that they can incorporate into the time that the children are learning at home.

7th—8th Grade CFP:

Starting in 2012, children wishing to prepare for Confirmation must register for 7th and 8th grade CFP classes.

Junior High, Grades 7& 8/ "Faith Alive" Program

In addition to CFP, 7th & 8th grades have the opportunity to participate in the Youth Ministry program called "Faith Alive". Direct questions regarding "Faith Alive" to the Youth Minister at 398-3821, Ext. 3149 for more information.

Sacramental Preparation

First Reconciliation

Preparation for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time

begins with the parents. Parents should be certain that their child has been enrolled in either CFP, St. Susanna, Mother Teresa School, Royalmont, Home Study or another Parish Religious Education Program (if from another parish) for at least one year.

This Sacrament is celebrated in Grade 2, but exceptions can be made. Preparation is given in parish and school faith formation classes, but home reinforcement is expected through attendance at retreats and parent meetings.

Parent preparation begins in September and the First Reconciliation celebration is held in December at the Parish Advent Reconciliation Services. A retreat for students is also held.

First Eucharist

Preparation for the celebration of the Sacrament of Eucharist for the first time begins with the parents. Parents should make sure that their child has been enrolled in CFP, St. Susanna School, Mother Teresa School, Royalmont, Home Study, or another Religious Education Program (if from another parish) for at least two years. Weekly Mass attendance is essential.

Ordinarily this Sacrament is for Grade 2 students, but exceptions can be made.

Preparation is given in school and parish formation classes. Home reinforcement is expected through retreats and parent meetings.

Parent preparation begins in January-February and the celebrations are held in late April and May. A retreat for students is also held.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Children (RCIA for Children)

The Sacraments of Christian Initiation, (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) are

extremely important and necessary in our journey of faith formation.

Occasionally, an older child will be seeking one or more of these sacraments. The instruction required is offered through our Adult Christian Formation Ministry, not the Children's

Formation Program. Please contact Susan Hack at 398-3821 ext 3169 for questions

pertaining to older children and the sacraments of initiation.

Outside Activities

Field Trips

All field trips must be announced to the Program Administrator in advance (at least 3 weeks) prior to the trip, and approval given. All field trips must be curriculum

related. Parents must be notified in writing by the Christian Formation catechist, and a copy of the letter must be on file with the CFP Administrator

Archdiocesan Field Trip Permission Forms are available from the Program Administrator and must be used. Parents will be expected to sign this Permission Form, which releases the parish from liability in case of injury. Medical and other pertinent emergency information is included on this form.

The mode of transportation, as well as the time/place of departure and arrival must be included on an additional form specific to St. Susanna Parish. This form is also

available from the Children's Formation Program Administrator, and must be sent to the parents, and returned with a parents' signature. A copy of each form must be on file in the Children's Formation Room during the entire time of the trip. The originals must be included on the trip and made easily accessible to the catechist.

Note: No one has an inherent right to participate in a field trip. The Program Administrator can refuse participation to a child whose conduct is less than satisfactory. Likewise, attendance on a field trip cannot be compelled. Parents have the right to refuse to allow their children to participate.

(A primer on Law for DRE's and Youth Ministers, p. 52-53).

Parental Communication, Involvement and Homework

Parents are encouraged to express their desires, identify their concerns, ask questions and make suggestions regarding the Christian Formation Program.

Parent volunteers are

always appreciated, and they need to inform their child's catechist if they are interested in helping in any capacity. Parents are kept abreast of their children's lessons, via

periodic letters sent home with their children. Likewise, the child's book goes home each day/week. Often catechists will ask the parent to review the lesson, and perhaps finish some unfinished pages. It is the reviewing of the lesson that is important.

Homework varies with each catechist, but the normal policy is a review of the week's lesson, and perhaps an assignment to "live what we discussed".

Once again, reading the catechists' letters on a regular basis will keep parents abreast of what they are expected to do. In addition, Newsletters are sent home on a regular basis from the Children's Formation Program via e-mail or in the children's folders.

Disabilities and Faith Formation

At St. Susanna, we have classes for all students. Children with disabilities should follow their school IEP's as to placement within our formation classes. Please provide a copy of the student's placement from their IEP so that we can best serve your student. We have opportunities for students with cognitive and/or sensory needs that have teaching strategies that best meet their needs such as hands on learning, smaller class sizes, etc. For students with mild disabilities, it is helpful to give the director and teacher specific strategies that a child needs. Please give this information in advance of classes so that our volunteer teachers have time to learn what is needed and plan appropriately for your student. Questions regarding our special needs opportunities should be directed to Susan Hack, 398-3821 ext. 3169 or hacks@stsusanna.org.

Problem Resolution

Problem resolution is handled in the following way:

1. Communication with the person with whom there is a problem.
2. Communication with the person's most immediate supervisor.
3. Seek the help of a third party to facilitate discussion. (The Pastor, and Staff of the Christian Formation Office may be helpful if needed.)
4. Referral of the matter to the local due process procedure.
5. Provide information concerning the matter to the Archdiocesan Mediation Office. -9-

Child Protection Policy

All employees, clerics and regular volunteers must register and receive training through the VIRTUS Protecting God's Children and be fingerprinted for the purpose of a background check. A regular volunteer is anyone who functions in a regular, significant relationship with children, such as a catechist, scout leader, coach, etc. Any volunteer who works with children more than three hours a month, or more frequently than once a month must comply with this policy.

Discipline: Positive Classroom Management

Discipline procedures include Positive Classroom Management. Every attempt is made to encourage students to choose responsible behavior and allow for optimum faith formation. At the same time the catechist has the responsibility to create the best environment possible for faith formation of each child and the class as a whole. In summary, the catechist has the right to teach, and the student enjoys the right to learn.

Each catechist determines a small number of rules and consequences for his/her classroom. These are communicated to students and parents.

Any severe disruption results in a child being removed from the room immediately, and the Program Administrator is notified.

Some General Rules include:

- * Students will follow directions
- *Students walk, never run, when moving from room to room.
- *Students keep hands, feet and objects to themselves.
- *Students respect the property of the classroom.
- *Students will be respectful and courteous in behavior and language.
- *Students will bring textbooks and folders to class each week.
- *Students will not chew gum in the building.

Exceptions

The Program Administrator retains the right to make exceptions to the disciplinary rules and consequences if necessary.

Search and Seizure Policy

When a young person is suspected of being in possession of weapons, drugs, or stolen property, the Program Administrator will have to search. The decision to search should involve some suspicion of wrongdoing on a young person's part. An adult staff member or volunteer should witness the search. The individual should be asked to cooperate. If the person refuses, the parents should be contacted to come to the program site and assist in the search. If the parents do not cooperate, the Program Administrator may impose a penalty, even exclusion from the program.

Safety and Emergency Procedures

Parish Facilities

The St. Susanna Meyer Center and Education Center, which includes the Music Room and the Cafeteria, is used for Christian Formation sessions. The gymnasium is only used for Early Childhood CFP on Sunday morning and is used for sport teams during Sunday and Monday evening CFP sessions. Occasionally, students will be taken to the Church building as part of their lesson. Permission to use the Church or Education Center grounds is secured through the Children's Formation Program Administrator so that the whereabouts of the class is known.

Arrival and Pick Up Times

Beginning and ending times for CFP sessions are included in this handbook. Students of grades 1-4 must be personally escorted to and from the classrooms and car by a parent, guardian, or older sibling. Note: ONLY those 5th graders and older may pick up a younger sibling, not 4th graders. Children should not arrive more than 10 minutes early for class, and they need to be picked up promptly at the end of class.

In the event that a child is not picked up, they remain with the catechist for 10 minutes. After that, the child will be brought to the Christian Formation Room on the 1st floor of the primary wing of the Education Center in Room #9, and we will call the parents. No Catechist or any other person will take your child home without your permission.

If your child will be arriving or leaving with anyone outside the ordinary arrangements established, please notify the catechist in writing. If carpooling, be sure the catechist knows who will be with whom, and when. This should be put in writing for the catechist at the beginning of the year and be kept on file in the Children's Formation Room. All exceptions should be noted.

Session Times:

Grades 1 - 8

Session A, Sunday morning — 10:30-11:45 am

Session B, Monday evening — 6:15-7:30 pm

Home Study

Parking Lot Safety

It is necessary to use caution when entering and leaving the parking lot when many children are arriving and leaving. Most of the doors to the school building are opened, so children may enter and exit through any of these doors. The glass doors along Reading Road will not be accessible for entering or exiting the building. Be sure that your child knows which door you wish for him/her to use. **Please be respectful of the Handicap Parking spaces.** We do have families who are in need of these spaces.

Fire and Weather Emergencies

A Fire Drill is held annually, on the 2nd evening of CFP classes, Grades 1-8. The

Children's Formation Program follows the fire procedures set forth by the Mason Fire Department. A copy of the evacuation procedure is posted in every room, and every catechist is made aware of the procedure.

A Tornado Drill is held annually, on the 2nd evening of CFP classes, Grades 1-8. The Christian Formation Program follows the tornado procedures set forth by the Mason Fire Department. A copy of the tornado plan is posted in every room, and every catechist is made aware of the procedure.

In case of severe, inclement weather, please check our website at ww.stsusanna.org. Each family will be called by the child's catechist to indicate that classes for that session are cancelled. Ordinarily, the sessions are held unless very severe weather prohibits it. Sessions are cancelled on a one-by-one basis. They are also not automatically cancelled if the schools have been.

Thus, a Sunday session could be cancelled because of bad weather, but the Monday sessions would go on as planned, or vice versa. The rule of thumb is this: "don't call us, we will call you". Please make sure the Program Administrator is kept up-to-date on your e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers.

Accident/Illness

Occasionally, accidents do happen, or a child gets sick while at the CFP session. The child will be brought to the Children's Formation Room immediately, and normal first aid procedures will be used if the accident/condition is not severe. No medicine of any kind will be given. The Program Administrator, or the Facilitator of the Program will be available to take care of the student. If necessary, or if deemed an emergency, the parent will be called. In the event that a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person supplied on the Registration Form will be notified. The parent or contact person is expected to come immediately and pick up the child at the Children's Formation Room on the 1st Floor of the primary wing of the Education Center in room #9.

Emergency Medical Information

Emergency medical information is supplied on the Registration Form turned in by the parents at the time of registration. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the Program Administrator of any changes in the original form. This form is available at all times in the Children's Formation Room in case of emergencies.

If a child has severe allergies or any special medical needs, please contact Kristen

Tell (tellk@stsusanna.org—398-3821 ext. 3135) or Lauren Zinnecker (zinneckerl@stsusanna.org) the Program Administrators for Grades 1-8, to work on an action plan in case of emergencies.

Amendment Policies

Parents will be notified in writing or online when any of these policies are changed or amended.