



Expectations & Guidelines for a Return to Faith Formation 2021-22

St. Luke – Plain and St. John the Evangelist – Spring Green

Expectations for Parishes for the Return to Faith Formation in 2021-22

In light of our current situation in this time of COVID-19, the Diocese of Madison will strive to maintain the integrity of its parish formation programs while keeping the parish, children, and volunteers safe. Parish programs that are expected to return to live in-person formation include, but are not limited to, grade school, middle school, and high school formation and sacramental preparation (First Reconciliation, First Communion, Confirmation, and RCIA/children's catechumenate).

These guidelines and procedures have been drawn up based upon recommendations from the Diocese of Madison, Sauk County Health Department and the State of Wisconsin Department of Health.

Protective Measure Guidelines

- **Children's Personal Health Check:** Parents should check the temperature of children daily before they attend any faith formation event. If children have any symptoms of sickness (temperature, cough, runny nose, vomiting or diarrhea), they are not permitted to attend the event on that day. Children should be symptom free without medicine for 72 hours before returning to the parish.

Common COVID-19 Symptoms:

- o Cough
- o Sore Throat
- o Fever (100 degrees or greater)
- o Muscle Aches
- o Shortness of Breath
- o Fatigue
- o Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- o Loss of smell or taste
- o Congestion or runny nose

PLEASE DO NOT send your child to faith formation if he/she is exhibiting any signs of illness. We need all families to support our efforts on pre-screening children in order to keep everyone safe and healthy.

If a child has symptoms at faith formation:

· The following are guidelines for a student who is exhibiting two or more symptoms of COVID-19 while at Faith Formation.

A - Student should report symptoms to teacher. If the teacher observes symptoms, the student will be sent to the office to be placed in the health isolation room.

B - Parent/guardian will be notified and should come to pick up the student.

C - Student will stay home from class until they are symptom free for 10-14 days (if not tested) or until test results are received depending on guidance from Sauk County Health recommendations or your physician.

- **Adult Participants/Catechists/Adult Volunteers Health Check:** Catechists, adult participants and volunteers who assist in catechetical programming should take a daily temperature of themselves before attending formation at the parish. If adults have any symptoms of sickness (temperature, cough, runny nose, vomiting, or diarrhea), they are not permitted to attend an event on that day. Adults should be symptom free without medicine for 72 hours before returning to the parish.
- **Social Distancing:** Parish leaders should take time each day to remind participants of proper social distancing. In each space that is used participants will sit/stand with appropriate space between each person (3 feet to the greatest extent possible). This will help them maintain an appropriate distance while attending events. It would be ideal for participants to have assigned seating and remain sitting in the same space when they return to a room to minimize the spread of germs.
- **Masking:** Masking is **NOT** required at this time. Students may choose to wear a mask if they desire. The parish/diocese will not provide masks for children/adults/catechists participating in faith formation programs.
- **Playgrounds:** Children are permitted at this time to use playground equipment. Children should be encouraged to use appropriate social distancing, and hand sanitation should be provided for children after they use playground equipment.
- **Games:** Games that will be played during formation times should have minimal personal contact and respect social-distancing guidelines.
- **Large Group Events:** Large group gatherings should be held only on rare occasions and if county guidelines can be met with space and appropriate social distancing.
- **Classroom/Formation Spaces:** Tables, desks, and frequently touched surfaces should be sanitized at the end of each day after use. Desks and learning spaces should be set up in an arrangement that allows participants to be socially distanced at 3 feet apart to the greatest extent possible.
- **Classroom Materials:** Each person should have his or her own supplies to use during formation sessions. Eliminate the sharing of materials to mitigate the passing of germs from one individual to another.
- **Drop-Off & Pick-Up:** Parents may drop off and pick up their child(ren) at the front doors of the school but parents are asked to not enter the building. At the end of the class Catechists will bring the children to the doors, at staggered times to avoid larger groups, where children can meet up with parents outside.
- **Mass:** Mass guidelines will follow the Diocese of Madison guidelines for returning to Mass.

Hygiene Guidelines

- **Healthy and Safety:** We are committed to safeguarding the health and safety of all who enter the building. Therefore, all who attend formation should comply with the parish hygiene policy.
- **Physical Contact:** Parish catechetical leaders, catechists, and volunteers should avoid physical contact with participants and should encourage participants to maintain appropriate social distancing.
- **Sanitizing Stations:** Hand sanitizer will be made available for use at any time during faith formation
- **Handwashing:** All individuals should wash/sanitize hands after using the restroom or before and after consuming any food.
- **Sharing Materials:** Participants in formation programs should not share materials but rather bring their own or be assigned materials for their personal use.

Food Safety Guidelines

- **Snacks:** It is preferable that food distributed by the parish for children's snacks, etc., be purchased as pre-packaged food. Parishes may opt not to offer food and instead ask parents to send snacks for the children that need no adult assistance for preparation.
- **Food Distribution:** When food is made available at a formation event, there must be one adult assigned to distribute food and drinks. Individual serving is not permitted. Those who are assigned to distribute food must be wearing a face covering and gloves.
- **Sharing Food:** Individuals are not permitted to share food or drinks at the parish.
- **Water Fountains:** Individuals are not permitted to use public water fountains.
- **Water Bottles:** Children should bring individual water bottles (labeled by name) or be provided individual cups (labeled by name) to drink water.
- **Sanitation:** Each parish site should sanitize eating tables and chairs after individuals have snacked or eaten meals.

Cleaning Guidelines

- **Commitment to Cleaning:** All parish staff/catechetical leaders and volunteers must be fully committed to safeguarding the health and safety of all individuals by complying with cleaning policies in each parish/facility.
- **Cleaning Instruction:** All catechetical leaders and volunteers will be instructed on the facility cleaning policy.
- **Collaborative Cleaning:** Since the Religious Ed. program and Youth Ministry program share a space with a Catholic school, we are working with principals to ensure a mutual and respectful understanding of the cleaning responsibilities.
- **Cleaning Basics:** Regular cleaning may include (but is not limited to):
 - Using proper disinfecting solutions.
 - Wiping down frequently touched surfaces before and after every session (desks, chairs, tables, door handles, etc.).
 - Cleaning restrooms after formation sessions.
 - A regular deep cleaning schedule.

Policy & Procedures for COVID-19 Exposure & Positive Tests

- **Transparency & Charity:** All those involved in faith formation (parish catechetical leaders, catechists, volunteers, and participants) should be transparent and honest about any health concerns related to the COVID-19 situation. We must always act in charity in our response to possible COVID-19 symptoms or concerns. For example, we would always assume in charity that someone not wearing a mask has a good reason for not doing so.
- **Response to Catechists/Volunteers Who Test Positive for COVID-19:** If an employee, parish catechetical leader, catechist, or volunteer tests positive for COVID -19, the spaces in which that person worked or resided should be closed off and deep cleaned. The individual will be expected to be quarantined for 10 days (or according to local county ordinance) and should not return to serve in the parish unless he or she meets the following criteria: fever free for 3 days (without medicine), symptoms have subsided, county requirements for quarantine have been observed, or at least 10 days have passed without any symptoms.
- **Response of Those Who Show Symptoms, Have Been Exposed or Suspect Illness:** Those who begin to show symptoms of illness or suspect illness should not attend formation sessions. A space that was occupied by the individual should be disinfected. The individual should choose a self-imposed quarantine (according to county guidelines) and seek a COVID-19 test. No one should return to service until any necessary quarantine ends and symptoms have subsided.
- **Children/Families Who Test Positive for COVID-19:** If a participant in faith formation tests positive for COVID-19, the spaces which that person occupied should be closed off and deep cleaned. The individual will be expected to be quarantined for 10 days (or according to local county ordinance). A participant should not return to the parish unless he or she meets the following criteria: fever free for 3 days (without medicine), symptoms have subsided, county requirements for quarantine have been observed, or at least 10 days have passed without any symptoms. Families who have one member who tests positive for COVID-19 should assume that all members have been exposed. Families ought to consider quarantining as a unit or having all members tested. Members of the family should not return to formation until the expected quarantine time for “no symptoms” has passed.
- **Notification to Participants in Faith Formation Regarding a Positive COVID -19 Test:** If a participant, parish catechetical leader, catechist or employee tests positive for COVID-19, the parish upon notification should immediately contact medical authority or public health officials for consultation and follow appropriate directives/suggestions, especially for those who may have been exposed to the infected person. Directives may include notification to participants, parents, staff, etc., with appropriate instructions to individuals. Exposure cases may vary in potential severity and risk based on the situational elements at the time and place of exposure, such as the symptomatic nature of the infected person at the time of exposure, the duration of exposure, the proximity of exposure, protective measures in place at the time (e.g., facial coverings), and the confined nature of the space. The potential directives for an exposure case may vary as well, including sanitation of space, testing, monitoring for symptoms, tracing, tracking, and quarantining.

Disclaimer

These expectations and guidelines were put in place using the latest information from the Diocese of Madison and state and local health officials in order to decrease as much as possible the chance of spreading any illnesses. However, this situation is ever changing and so policies and procedures may need to be changed to better serve everyone involved. We will be working with the Sauk County Health Department and the Diocese of Madison to determine the best course of action. If you or your child is experiencing symptoms you are encouraged to seek COVID testing. For testing, contact your physician or the Sauk County Health Dept. at 608-355-3290 or [www.co.sauk.wi/public health/coronavirus](http://www.co.sauk.wi/public%20health/coronavirus).

Parent Agreement

Please indicate that you have read, understood and agree to follow the above guidelines by initialing each statement below and completing the form.

_____ I have read the above guidelines and agree to assess my child(ren) before class and not permit them to come to Religious Ed. classes if they are displaying any symptoms of the common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious illness.

_____ I will ensure that myself or an authorized person is available to pick up my child(ren) immediately should they become sick while at a Religious Ed. class or Youth Ministry event.

Names and grades of children enrolled in faith formation:

Signature of parent: _____

Date signed: _____