



**Our Lady of Lourdes
Family Faith Formation
2011-2012
Handbook**

Our Lady of Lourdes Family Faith Formation Mission Statement

The Family Faith Formation program at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish is dedicated to providing adults, youth, and children with the knowledge, experiences and skills necessary to become faithful and fruitful disciples of Jesus. In keeping with their age, they will assume responsibility as vital members of the parish and be able to participate in the Church's mission to proclaim, celebrate and serve.

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church

10114 Highway 6
Hitchcock, TX 77563

Phone: 409-925-3579

Fax: 409-925-5094

Website: www.OLOLchurch.org

Pastoral Staff

Father John H. Kappe, Pastor

Deacon Joe Kelly

Deacon Alvin Lovelady

Janell Grassmuck, Parish Secretary

Antoinette Winn, Parish Accountant

Alecia Lemelle, Coordination of Adult Faith Formation

Kristin Fontana, Coordinator of Youth Ministry

Yvonne Routh, Coordinator of Children Faith Formation—cell: 409-880-2718

Mike Comeaux, Coordinator of Music Ministry

Table of Contents

Overview of OLOL Family Faith Formation (FFF)	4
Elementary Level (Pre-K through 6 th grade)	4
Junior High Level (7 th grade and 8 th grade)	4
High School Level (9 th grade through 12 th grade)	4
Adult Level	4
Family Faith Formation Policies	5
Admission and Registration	5
Class Times	5
Children Faith Formation Process	5
Sacramental Preparation	6
First Reconciliation (Confession) and First Eucharist (Holy Communion)	6
Confirmation	6
Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC)	7
Drop-off Procedures: 4:30-6:00 p.m.	7
Pick-up Procedures: 7:15-7:45 p.m.	7
Attendance	7
Classroom Participation	7
Assistance from CRE and CFF Staff	7
Communication with Parents	7
Communication between Parent and Child	8
Teaching and Learning Prayers	8
Our Lady of Lourdes FFF Procedures	8
Information Desk	8
FFF Office	8
Tardy Students	8
The Catholic Day School Shares and We Respect Their Property	8
Discipline Management	9
General	9
Guidelines in Youth Room (Upper Room)	9
Cell Phones / iPods	9
Food and Drink Not Allowed/Skates and Gum Not Allowed	9
Wear Appropriate Attire	10
Absences	10
Right to Amend	10
Emergency Cancellation of Classes	10
2011-2012 Calendar for FFF	10

Overview of OLOL Family Faith Formation (FFF)

The Our Lady of Lourdes Family Faith Formation program is for all adults and children registered in OLOL parish. FFF is the practice of exploring, strengthening and developing our belief in God and the way of leading our lives here on earth. Our faith should never reach final completion, but should always be in a process of rejuvenation and growth. FFF is continually striving to help each individual to grow spiritually.

Elementary Level (Pre-K through 6th grade)

Our textbook series, *Faith First, Legacy Edition* by RCL introduces the four pillars of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. These pillars include:

- Creed
- Sacraments
- Morality
- Prayer

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist Sacramental Preparation Sessions text are also published by RCL.

This textbook series provides development and reinforcement of learning these pillars at each grade level. Our instruction builds an age-appropriate faith as children mature. Each lesson is scripture-based to help the children understand the Bible and their relationship with their creator.

Junior High Level (7th grade and 8th grade)

The textbook series for the 7th and 8th grades is the Faith First Legacy Edition Junior High books:

- Church and Sacraments
- Mystery of God
- Morality in Christ
- Jesus and the New Testament

High School Level (9th grade through 12th grade)

The Youth Ministry vision is to bring youth closer to Christ by fostering a personal relationship with Him and His Church. We strive to accomplish this through Wednesday night Family Faith Formation sessions, also known as Youth Nites. The format is presented with all of grades 9-12 meeting together in a large group in the Upper Room of Madonna Hall. We follow a four part program of Gather, Proclaim, Break and Send with fun games, interesting teachings, inspiring group discussions, and experiential prayer.

We cover the following topics throughout a four year period: Scripture, the Person of Jesus, the Mission of Jesus, the Church, the Sacraments, and Life in Christ.

In addition to the Youth Nites we have many opportunities to pray together and play together through weekend retreats, conferences, summer camps, Christian concerts, social events, service projects, and leadership opportunities.

For Confirmation information, please see page 6.

Adult Level

In today's Church, more and more people realize the tremendous need to be Christians who are in lifelong faith formation. Our faith is not fully mature when we are confirmed or graduate high school. Our faith journey is a lifelong one and requires religious education through which we grow in our relationship with God and others.

Throughout the year various programs are offered for adults. Bible study, speakers, sacramental preparation, liturgical themed presentations, etc. take place during the year. Please check the church bulletins for information or call the parish office.

As we prepare to implement the new translation of the Mass (1st Sunday of Advent), a 6 week course will be offered. A *Biblical Walk Through the Mass* devotes a lesson to each of the major sections of the Mass and is based on the 2011 revised translation.

Family Faith Formation Policies

These FFF policies provide the directions for admission, registration, class times, drop-off and pick-up procedures, attendance, tardiness, dress code, code of conduct, respect for school property, and discipline. Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church FFF Program reserves the right to amend these policies as necessary to meet the requirements for effective religious education in the best interests of the parents, their children and the Church. We will notify parents in writing if changes are made to any policies and procedures during the school year.

Admission and Registration

To be admitted to our FFF programs, the parents or guardians of each child must be registered parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes Church.

Follow the steps below to register your children.

- † Family must be registered in OLOL parish. A registration form may be obtained at the “Catechist Corner” desk in Madonna Hall on FFF nights or from the parish office.
- † Children entering the Pre-K class must be 4 years of age by September 1.
- † A registration form (one per family) and the attached white form (one for each child) must be filled out to attend the FFF sessions. Please, fill out forms completely and accurately.
- † A Baptismal certificate is needed for any child celebrating First Reconciliation, First Eucharist or Confirmation. If your child was not baptized at OLOL, a copy is needed by September 30. We must use the child’s name as it appears on the Baptismal certificate.
- † Parents of children and youth who will celebrate First Reconciliation (Confession), First Eucharist (Communion) or Confirmation should check the Sunday bulletin or call the parish office to see when the preparation classes meet for each of these sacraments.
- † This year there is a textbook fee. If you are unable to pay the fee when you turn in the registration form, you may pay at a later time by putting it in an envelope clearly marked FFF and placing it in the offertory basket during Mass or you may hand deliver or mail it to the parish office. If the registration form is turned in before July 31, there will not be a late fee charged. New members to the parish will not be charge a late fee.

Class Times

All FFF classes are held on Wednesday evenings as follows:

- Pre-K through 5th grade: **6:00 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.**
- 7th grade through Adult: **6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

First Eucharist and First Reconciliation sacramental preparation classes will be held on Sunday evenings as scheduled. Confirmation II Preparation classes are generally held on the second Sunday of each month. Refer to the 2011-2012 Calendar for the exact time and dates. A copy of the “Family Faith Formation 2011-2012 Handbook” can be found on the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church website, ololchurch.org.

Children Faith Formation Process

Collaboration among catechists and parents is important. Each week your child may be asked to do a home assignment (i.e. daily prayers, reading, or other homework activity). Please contact your child’s catechist (teacher) if you have questions or need more information. Open a dialogue with your child’s catechist to become more involved with sharing your child’s religious education. You, as parents, provide the most and best examples of spirituality for your child.

Sacramental Preparation

Parents and guardians of Sacramental candidates (First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation) will receive reminder notices for upcoming events. These reminders will be sent home with the students and will be posted in the Sunday church bulletin.

Note: All Sacramental preparation classes missed must be made up.

No more than one sacramental class may be missed to remain in this year's program.

First Reconciliation (Confession) and First Eucharist (Holy Communion)

The celebration of First Reconciliation and First Communion occur during the second grade year for students who have been baptized. Older students who have not received either of these sacraments are eligible if they have been baptized.

Sacramental preparation is the responsibility of the parent. To aid you in this process, a parent orientation meeting and three sacramental preparation classes will be presented for each sacrament. **Refer to the calendar at the end of this handbook for the scheduled times and dates.** The parent(s) or an approved designated adult and the child must attend these classes. Older candidates will also be required to complete the same take home materials (the book and the Readiness Review) with a parent/approved adult. These materials are designed to help everyone prepare to receive each sacrament.

Confirmation

“Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace” for “by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit...” [Cf. Roman Ritual, Rite of Confirmation (OC), Introduction 1] [LG 11; OC Introduction 2].

At Our Lady of Lourdes we have three levels of Confirmation preparation:

Confirmation I: 9th grade year, or first year attending High School Faith Formation/Youth Nites. The youth spend this year exploring their faith and getting ready for immediate Confirmation preparation the following year. Candidates are expected to attend 80% of Youth Nights in order to move on to Confirmation II. In a typical semester, this means youth are allowed to miss no more than 2 Youth Nites.

Confirmation II: 10th grade year, or second year attending High School Faith Formation/Youth Nites. Candidates spend this year in immediate preparation for the Sacrament. The Sacrament of Confirmation “involves God sealing the relationship (introduced at Baptism) with the strength needed to live out the calling to build God’s Kingdom as a disciple of Jesus within the Body of Christ” [Diocesan Confirmation Guidelines, 5]. With parents and sponsors serving as the beginning foundation for Confirmation, preparation is achieved with full and active participation in the following areas:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| ❖ Sunday Mass | ❖ Service Projects |
| ❖ Retreats (Kick-off and Weekend Retreats) | ❖ Community Conferences/Retreats |
| ❖ Confirmation Sessions (7) | ❖ Liturgical Rituals |
| ❖ Youth Nites | ❖ Holy Week Services |

Teens in 10th grade or older are invited to participate in Confirmation II if they have attended 80% of the previous year’s Youth Nights and have been baptized, celebrated First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Through Confirmation preparation, candidates have the personal responsibility to choose to complete initiation into the faith life of the Church by meeting all necessary guidelines to receive the Sacrament. The text we use throughout Confirmation Preparation is *Receiving the Gift of the Spirit* by Pflaum Publishing.

Confirmation III: Post Confirmation, 11th - 12th grade years, or 3rd/4th year attending High School Faith Formation/Youth Nites. Receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation is not the end – it’s the beginning! The Confirmed youth spend these two years in leadership roles while growing deeper in faith. During these two years youth can be a leader by helping with Confirmation I and II, Children’s Faith Formation, Youth Nites, music ministry, hospitality ministers, lectors, Eucharistic ministers and more.

Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation together constitute the sacraments of Christian initiation. Our hope is that this Confirmation process will aid our youth in accepting the call to be active members of the Catholic community and to live as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA) for Children

The RCIA program is for children seven years or older who have not been baptized and wish to become Catholic. Both the child and their parent(s), or an approved designated adult must attend monthly sessions. Please contact the Coordinator of Adult Faith Formation or the Coordinator of Children Faith Formation at the parish office, if you want to enter your child in the RCIA program.

Drop-off Procedures: 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Staff will be available to meet all Pre-K through 12th grade students at the door of Madonna Hall. Parents or Guardians may use the drive through of Madonna Hall to drop off their children.

High school students who drive their own vehicle **MUST** park in the parking lot behind Madonna Hall and the Pavilion. Students may not socialize in the parking lot before or after class periods. Parents will be contacted when this occurs.

Pick-up Procedures: 7:15 – 7:45 p.m.

Parents of Pre-K-5th grade students **may** park in the main parking lot behind Madonna Hall and the Pavilion and **must** come into Madonna Hall to safely pick up their children. On rainy days, parents and guardians may use the drive through area to pick up their children.

Junior high and high school students will be allowed to meet their parents at their car in the parking lot. Student socializing in the parking lot is not permitted. **ONLY** on rainy days, should parents and guardians use the drive through area to pick up their children.

Attendance

Your child's regular attendance and participation in FFF is important. Keep in mind that FFF volunteer catechists spend several hours each week preparing the lesson plans for their classes. More importantly, regular attendance is an important factor that will help your child deepen his/her understanding of our Church's teachings, Holy Scripture, prayer, and participation in the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish community.

Parents are encouraged to help their children learn their prayers and discuss what was covered in each class with their students every week.

We emphasize that learning is most effective in the home. As parents, you are your child's primary teacher of our Catholic faith.

If there are special circumstances regarding your child's participation in the program, please meet with the Coordinator of Religious Education in advance, if possible. Other options such as home study may be available.

Classroom Participation

Students are to behave in a Christian manner at all times and to be respectful of and cooperative with any adults helping with the program. Students should actively participate in classroom activities and discussions. They should attend class regularly and complete any assignments and homework. All students should honor the dress code as well as the code of conduct.

Each week, your child may receive a take-home assignment. Please spend time helping your child complete each assignment.

Assistance from CRE and FFF Staff

Parents may meet with a Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE) and FFF staff at the Information Desk located near the entrance of Madonna Hall on FFF session days to obtain answers to questions or to discuss FFF activities.

The FFF staff's principal objective is to serve the religious education needs of our children and youth. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please share them with your child's catechist (teacher) or call the FFF Office.

Communication with Parents

We ask that parents provide the CRE and FFF staff with telephone numbers where you can be reached in emergencies during class times. If these numbers change, please provide the updated telephone numbers. We should be able to immediately contact you during class times.

Every week, parents should watch for reminder notes that are occasionally sent home with the students, as well as notices in the Church bulletin.

Occasionally, we may ask parents of students who are participating in Sacramental Preparation to provide snacks and drinks or a small luncheon meal when required. We appreciate your cooperation and support.

Communication between Parent and Child

Because parents have a grave responsibility for the religious education of their children, please talk with your children after each class to determine:

- If notices or messages were sent home for the parents.
- Learning experiences—what was learned, what kinds of class activities took place?
- If homework is required for the next session?

Teaching and Learning Prayers

Parents have the responsibility for teaching their children traditional Catholic prayers. Prayers are a religious tradition. They provide an identity with our Church community.

Commonly known prayers allow children to pray with adults and other children; furthermore, the content of traditional prayers helps preserve beliefs. Long-familiar prayers surface spontaneously and may provide solace in times of need when original words are hard to find.

The requirement to know, by heart, certain prayers is important to many parents; moreover, teaching specific prayers is a catechetical requirement from our archdiocese.

All students receive a list of prayers at the beginning of the year. The children are required to memorize these prayers and will be tested in class.

We learn prayers at home and at FFF. Parents should assist their children in learning specific prayers through repetition at home. Set aside time for Bible reading, learning prayers, and talking with God. Put a copy of prayers on the refrigerator, on a bathroom mirror, etc. Help them make prayer bookmarks for gifts to give to family and friends. By praying new prayers several times during the week, at meals, at bedtime, and in the car, children will quickly learn them.

Children should know that prayer is talking with God. He wants to hear from us several times every day. Prayers can be short or long; written, spoken, sung or thought; and prayed anywhere.

Do you need help finding a list of prayers? Obtain a copy of Father Kappe's, *Living Our Faith*, and see "Prayers Catholics Should Know" to help your family to pray at home.

Our Lady of Lourdes FFF Procedures

The following procedures explain how we expect to work with parents and students on a weekly basis.

Information Desk

As you enter Madonna Hall on FFF days, you will find an Information Desk (Catechists Corner). Parents/Guardians may go there for assistance. All tardy children will report there for admittance to class.

FFF Office

The FFF office in Madonna Hall is located in the hallway across from the small kitchen. It is through the double doors, behind the Catechist Corner, and is the second door to your right.

Tardy Students

All students who come in late are to report to the information desk (Catechists Corner). There they will be checked in for their class and escorted to their classroom. This should minimize the number of disruptions to the classrooms after the students have gone to the classrooms.

The Catholic Day School Shares and We Respect Their Property

We share the school with the OLOL Day School children. Please remind your child to respect the property of the Day School. The FFF catechist will furnish **ALL** of the materials and school supplies such as pencils and paper that are needed for FFF classes.

Discipline Management

General:

Bad behavior cannot be tolerated because disruption by one or more students affects the education process in the classroom for the other students. All students are expected to share in the faith learning experiences of the FFF program. If a child's behavior disrupts that learning process, the steps listed below will be followed to ensure that class participation may continue:

1. **First incident:** The child will be reminded of expected behavior and the consequences of misbehavior.
2. **Second incident:** The child will be sent to the FFF office for discussion of appropriate behavior with the Coordinator of Religious Education. The student may be returned to the classroom and/or the parent may be notified of the inappropriate behavior at this time.
3. **Third incident:** After returning to class, if inappropriate behavior continues, the child will be sent to the FFF Office to do their class work for the duration of class time. The parent(s) will be called to pick up their child and to discuss the situation.
4. **Fourth incident:** If the child's misbehavior continues, the child's parents will be called to pick up their child and to arrange for home study. A final examination will be administered by the Coordinator of Religious Education at the year's end.

Guidelines in Youth Room (The Upper Room)

These guidelines and consequences are posted in the Youth Room and explained at the beginning of each semester by the youth minister.

Guidelines:

- † Respect
 - Respect fellow youth
 - Respect adult volunteers
- † Keep confidentiality in small groups
- † Once you have arrived in the Upper Room/Youth Room, stay there until Youth Nite is over
- † Electronic devices must be silenced and not in use during the Youth Nite
- † Be open, participate, and have fun

Consequences:

1st Offense: Warning

2nd Offense: Private Discussion

3rd Offense: Removal / Sent Home

*Certain behaviors call for automatic removal. Any adult volunteer/Core Team member has the ability to remove a youth from Youth Nite at any time.

Cell Phones / iPods

Absolutely no cell phones, iPods, or similar electronic devices will be allowed in the FFF sessions. These items can be a major distraction and have no place in the FFF classrooms. If any of these devices are **seen**, they will be taken from the student and will only be returned to the parent/guardian upon request. The first occurrence will be a warning; a \$5.00 fee will be charged for each occurrence thereafter. If a student needs to use a telephone, one will be provided in the FFF office.

Food and Drink Not Allowed/Skates and Gum Not Allowed

Food and drink will NOT be allowed in the classrooms. Skates and gum are NOT allowed anywhere in the building or classrooms.

Wear Appropriate Attire

We ask that all students dress appropriately for FFF classes. Appropriate school and church clothes should be worn to class. Inappropriate language or graphics on clothing is not permitted. Clothing that is too tight, too short or too revealing is not permitted. Students are not to wear clothing that exposes midriffs or breasts. **If a child comes to class inappropriately dressed, he or she will be sent home.**

Absences

Students absent three or more times from FFF will receive a phone contact from the FFF office. Three absences are considered excessive and will require special consideration. **All sacrament preparation classes missed must be made up. Missing more than one Sacramental Preparation class will require the candidate to postpone the sacrament until next year.** Special situations need to be directed to the CRE, immediately.

Right to Amend

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church FFF Program reserves the right to amend this handbook as necessary. Parents will be notified in writing if changes are made to any procedures or information contained in this handbook.

Emergency Cancellation of Classes

When SFISD, HISD and other local schools have closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies, FFF classes will generally be canceled for that day. If you have any questions about cancellations, please call 409 925-3579 before bringing your child to class. Heavy rain does not automatically cause a cancellation. Please use your best judgment about whether or not to bring your children to class.

2011-2012 Calendar for FFF

The calendar of events and special holidays are sent home on the first night of FFF. Post this on your refrigerator or some other convenient place to keep informed important events. Extra copies are available at the catechist Corner on FFF night and the parish office.