

**Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish**

**Office of Faith Formation**

**Reopening Plans for the 2020-2021 Academic Year**



The Faith Formation Office is excited to be opening for the 2020-2021 year. Due to the Pandemic, we have amended some of our traditional school year plans and processes. Please see the following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) for details:

**Popular Faith Formation FAQ's:**

Q: Will the Faith Formation Office be open and operational for classes this year?

A: Yes, the Faith Formation Office will be open and operational this year. We have made changes to our typical program due to the current pandemic and covid-19.

Q: When will Faith Formation classes begin this year?

A: Weekly online learning lessons will begin the week of October 11, 2020.

Q: Will there be Faith Formation lessons over school break periods?

A: No, as always classes will not be held over school vacation periods.

Q: Will classes be held in-person or on-line?

A: For the 2020-2021 academic year all Faith Formation classes will be on-line. There will be no in person instruction.

Q: Are volunteers needed to support the Faith Formation Program this year?

A: Yes. As always, we are in need of volunteers. This year we seek Virtual Catchiest who would be willing to monitor the lesson submissions of one (1) class. If you want to learn more about this volunteer opportunity, please reach out to Marie Masaitis or Caitlin Mack at 508-697-3652.

Q: If I volunteer, will I need to complete a CORI and participate in Virtus Training?

A: Yes. If you volunteer in any capacity you must complete a yearly CORI and Virtus Training, which is a once in your lifetime training. If you have already completed Virtus Training, you are all set. If you have not, you may do so this year via a short on-line Training Link. Please see Tina Larson in the rectory for assistance with both CORI Forms and Virtus Training if you are willing to volunteer.

Q: What is the name of the on-line learning curriculum that students will be using?

A: Grades 1-8 will be using a new curriculum through the Sophia Institute. The Sophia Institute provides Faith Formation teachers with the background knowledge, teaching strategies, and classroom materials they need to engage their students with the Catholic Faith. Grades 9-10 will be using our "Chosen" curriculum and utilizing Google Classrooms for assignments.

Q: Who will be teaching the on-line classes?

A: The on-line lessons are meant to be completed independently by students though, depending on the age of the student, sometimes with the assistance of a parent. A Virtual Catechist will monitor lesson completion and weekly submissions. A Director of Religious Education will be in contact with a parent if a student begins to fall behind.

Q: Do the on-line lessons have to be completed on a predetermined day and time each week?

A: No. On-line lessons can be done anytime over the course of the week. Grades 1-8 have Friday nights designated as their weekly lesson due date while grades 9 and 10 have Sunday nights designated as their weekly lesson due date.

Q: How often are on-line lessons expected to be completed?

A: On-line lessons are expected to be completed weekly and must be submitted each week. If a student is sick or away on vacation, please simply contact your Virtual Catechist to let them know your weekly lesson will be delayed.

Q: Approximately, how much time should each weekly lesson take my student?

A: Each lesson should take your child approximately the same amount of time he/she would have spent in class if we were able to host in person learning which is typically 30-60 minutes each week.

Q: Who will be checking and approving the on-line lessons?

A: Every on-line class will have a Virtual Catechist assigned to them. The Virtual Catechists will check each student's work from home lesson submissions.

Q: What is the cost of Faith Formation classes this year?

A: The cost for the program has not increased. We will continue to use last year's pricing.

Q: When will registration open for classes this year?

A: Monday, September 14, 2020.

Q: I created a ParishSoft account last year but I forgot my **Log-on Credentials**. How can I find them or restore them?

A: [Click HERE if you need your USER NAME or PASSWORD](#)

Q: I am new to Faith Formation this year and I do not have a ParishSoft account yet. How do I create one?

A: [Click HERE if you are a NEW Family to Faith Formation](#)

Q: It is after Monday, September 14, 2020 and I am ready to register. What are the correct steps?

A: [CLICK HERE for FALL REGISTRATION steps](#)

- Q: After I register my student for on-line learning, how will we access the lessons?  
A: After you are registered, you will receive an email with an access link and start up directions. This will happen the week before classes start.
- Q: Will First Holy Communion student and Confirmation students be expected to use stamp cards at mass this year?  
A: As always students and families are expected to attend Mass weekly but we will not be using the Stamp Card system this year.
- Q: Will Confirmation students be expected to complete community service hours?  
A: No. There will not be a community service requirement this year for Confirmation I or Confirmation II students.
- Q: My student currently attends Catholic School but it is a sacrament year for them. Should I still registrar my student?  
A: Yes. Please register any Catholic School student that is set to receive either First Holy Communion or Confirmation this spring. Please choose the "Catholic School Student" option on the drop down menu. A Director of Religious Education will reach out to all catholic school with details.
- Q: Our family may consider not enrolling at all this year due to the Pandemic. Is it easy to re-enroll next year?  
A: If remote learning is not possible for your family this year, we will work with students in grades 3 - 8 over the summer months to catch up to their current grade level. Grades 1-2 and 9-10 are Sacramental years (First Holy Communion and Confirmation) and both require a 2 year preparation program. If a Sacramental cannot complete this year's program in one of those grades, we invite them to pick up where they left off beginning next fall.
- Q: Will there be a Children's Christmas Pageant this year?  
A: At this time, we do not have plans for a Children's Christmas Pageant.
- Q: What is the best way to contact Marie Masaitis, Director of Religious Education, K-6  
A: Marie is best reached at [mmasaitis@sta-parish.org](mailto:mmasaitis@sta-parish.org) or 508-697-3652.
- Q: What is the best way to contact Caitlin Mack, Director of Religious Education, 7-10  
A: Caitlin is best reached at [cmack@sta-parish.org](mailto:cmack@sta-parish.org) or 508-697-3652.
- Q: What is the best way to contact Kristine Smith, Administrative Assistant for Religious Ed?  
A: Kristine is best reached at [faithformation@sta-parish.org](mailto:faithformation@sta-parish.org) or 508-697-3652