

**ST. PIUS V**  
**FAITH FORMATION**  
**CATECHIST HANDBOOK**  
**2018 - 2019**



**ST. PIUS V CHURCH**  
**55 ELMHURST AVENUE**  
**PROVIDENCE, RI 02908**  
**(401) 684-3063 (faith formation); (401) 751-4871 (parish office)**  
**[www.stpiusvchurch.org](http://www.stpiusvchurch.org)**



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**ST. PIUS V**  
**FAITH FORMATION/RELIGIOUS EDUCATION VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS**

*Vision Statement*

The vision of the Faith Formation/Religious Education Ministry of St. Pius V parish is to help adults of all ages, youth, and children come to know Jesus Christ intimately, to be active members of His Body, the Church, to live as His faithful disciples, and to come to know, love, and live by the teachings of our Catholic Faith.

*Mission Statement*

In order to accomplish this vision, we seek to provide adults with engaging parish-wide and small-community faith formation opportunities, youth with the inspiration and formation necessary to live their faith among their peers, and children with a systematic presentation of the Faith and preparation for the Sacraments. For those seeking to become Catholic and those Catholics who are seeking the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion, we strive to offer comprehensive catechesis and formation in discipleship through the R.C.I.A. and R.C.I.C. programs.

Finally, we endeavor to support all who are associated with St. Pius V in their pursuit to become active members and good stewards in our community, encouraging them to contribute to the parish community through their particular gifts, charisms, knowledge, skills, and talents.

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Objectives of St. Pius V's Faith Formation/Religious Education Ministry\*

- To present a comprehensive and systematic formation in the Faith, that integrates knowledge of the Faith with living the Faith.
- To center on initiation into the life of the Trinity.
- To be appropriate to the age level, maturity, circumstances, language, and ethnic background of each participant.
- To involve all members of the parish community, young and old.
- To focus on the symbols, rituals, and prayers of the Church.
- To enable the believers to live out their faith in their everyday lives.

\* from the *National Directory for Catechesis*, 2005

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**2018 - 2019**

**ST. PIUS V FAITH FORMATION/RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF**

Pastor: Fr. Augustine Judd, O.P.  
(401) 751-4871  
[pastor@spvchurch.org](mailto:pastor@spvchurch.org)

Associate Pastor: Fr. Patrick Mary Briscoe, O.P.  
(401) 751-4871  
[vicar@spvchurch.org](mailto:vicar@spvchurch.org)

Directors

of Faith Formation: Mrs. Amanda J. da Silva & Mr. Charles A. da Silva  
(401) 684-3063 (GoogleVoice)  
[faithformation@spvchurch.org](mailto:faithformation@spvchurch.org)  
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St. Pius V Church  
55 Elmhurst Avenue  
Providence, RI 02908

Parish Website: [www.spvchurch.org](http://www.spvchurch.org)

*St. Pius V Faith Formation*  
**2018 – 2019 Faith Formation Calendar**  
Sunday, 11:30am – 12:45pm

September

- 22 – Catechist Training Session and Retreat (9:30-11 a.m., church hall)
- 30 – First Day of Classes & Parent/Guardian Meeting (school gym)

October

- 7 – **No Class** (Columbus Day Weekend)
- 14
- 21
- 28 – **No Class**

November

- 4
- 11 – **No Class** (Veterans' Day Weekend)
- 18
- 25 – **No Class** (Thanksgiving Weekend)

December

- 2
- 9
- 16
- 23 – **No Class** (Merry Christmas!)
- 30 – **No Class** (Happy New Year!)

January

- 6
- 12 – First Reconciliation Service (1:30-3pm; church)
- 13
- 20 – **No Class** (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- 27 – **No Class** (Catholic Schools Week) – *Open House at St. Pius V School*

February

- 3
- 10
- 17 – **No Class** (Winter Break)
- 24

March

- 3
- 10
- 17
- 24
- 31

April

- 7
- 14 – **No Classes** (April Vacation)
- 21 – **No Classes** (Happy Easter!)
- 28 – Last Day of Faith Formation Classes for All Grades

May

- 4 – First Holy Communion Retreat (9-11 am)
- 5 – First Holy Communion Mass (1:30pm; church)

- TBA – Confirmation Practice (6pm; church)
- TBA – Confirmation Mass (7pm; church)

[SUBJECT TO CHANGE – Updated 9/21/18]

## **Prayer for Catechists**

Gracious and all-loving Father, out of love for all people You spoke your Word who became flesh for our salvation.

May Your Word transform me so that the message of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, may be echoed through my teaching.

Allow me to guide the hearts of those whom I teach in such a way that they will enter more deeply into Your way of truth and salvation.

Grant me the insight needed to lead them to know, love, and serve You. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, may they become hearers and followers of Your Word, so that they might help transform the world to follow the way of life to which Your Son has called us all, for He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

[Source: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Catechetical Sunday 2012, Prayer for Catechists*]

## **LESSON PLANNING**

At the beginning of the year, take some time to go through your catechist manual and the 2018-2019 faith formation/religious education calendar to plan out how to cover the material in the textbook over the course of the year, as well as to understand how the material is broken up and how the basic themes flow throughout the year. Often, there is more material in the text than you can possibly cover in one class. You don't have to teach every detail. Choose what you think will work best for you and your class, and focus on the important themes of the chapter. Ask Amanda/Charlie for help if you're not comfortable with the material in the lessons. You are not expected to be an expert. Amanda/Charlie are here to help you in your important ministry.

Here are some lesson-planning tips:

❖ **Plan ahead.**

Take time in the days before your class to pray, read through the chapter, decide which materials from the chapter you will use, consult the recommended resources, and develop a lesson plan for yourself.

❖ **Engage the students right away.**

Have an activity or reading for the children to do as soon as they sit down, while the other students arrive and you take attendance. Since we only have them for an hour and fifteen minutes, it is important to get students focused and settled down quickly.

❖ **Open and close each class with a prayer, reading from Sacred Scripture, meditation, or song.**

Every chapter has suggested prayers and/or Bible readings. Repeating one of the readings from Sunday's liturgy can be effective, as well.

❖ **Think of each class as having a beginning, a middle, and an end.**

Go through the chapter(s) for the day and understand the central themes. Decide what the essentials are that you want the students to take away from your time together that day, and plan your lesson around those. Open with a prayer and an activity. Go through the lesson. Close with a prayer, reflection, writing exercise, or brief activity.

❖ **Vary your approach and activities.**

Each child learns in different ways. Use reading aloud, discussions, skits, songs, writing activities, small group work, games, art projects, quizzes, etc. Some children enjoy reading aloud for the group, others do not. Don't force a student to read aloud if he or she is uncomfortable doing so.

❖ **Don't be afraid to let the children be creative.**

Hands-on activities are always welcome in class, especially with the younger grades. Your catechist manual and the accompanying online resources will have plenty of suggestions for projects and activities to go along with each lesson. Simple tasks like writing a prayer or listing the Beatitudes become more memorable if done with crayons, markers, colored paper, or a decorative border. Just remember to allow time for cleanup and for glue to dry.

❖ **Set aside time for students to reflect and share.**

Let them talk about their experiences that relate to the theme of the lesson. Try to lead them to connect what they are learning with their everyday lives.

❖ **Involve your students' families.**

You may send the textbooks home with your students, if you wish. Encourage families to do the family activities suggested in the chapters.

❖ **Visit the church.**

If you have finished the lesson with time to spare, or if students are fidgety and you need to change the class dynamic, you may wish to take the class into the church for five minutes of prayer, or to walk the Stations of the Cross, search for symbols, look at the stories told in the stained glass/plastic window, or identify the statues. You can also plan a visit to the church in connection with a lesson on the Mass. Remember that the 11:30 a.m. Mass ends at about 12:30 p.m.

❖ **Plan a service project.**

Service projects are not just for students preparing for Confirmation. No grade is too young to engage in a service project. Invite the families of your students to help out. Ask us about projects within the parish or for service project ideas.

❖ **Conclude with a question.**

At the end of each class, ask the students what they learned that day. Ask them how they plan to follow through on what they learned. For example, if you have studied the Beatitudes in class, ask how the students could practice them at home.

## **RESOURCES**

**Textbooks:** Our basic materials for Grade 2, Grades 3/4, Grades 5/6 are the *Spirit of Truth* textbooks from the Sophia Institute for Teachers with a companion, annotated catechist manual.

Confirmation I and II uses *The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers* by Saint Mary's Press, which has Catechist Guides for each pillar of the Catechism (Creed, Sacraments, Morality, Prayer) and an Activity Booklet. Confirmation II also uses *Anointed in the Spirit*.

**Additional Resources:**

We have many additional supplementary materials for you, such as resource books, videos, and activities in the faith formation closet. We also have access to the diocesan Office of Faith Formation's Resource Library, which contains hundreds of books, videos, CD's, and other resources. It is located at One Cathedral Square, Providence, RI 02903. Please contact their office to schedule a time to go down for a visit (401-278-4646).

**Web Resources:**

- ❖ *Spirit of Truth* has a companion website to go with the textbook. It is loaded with supplemental materials for each year of the program. Please see this link for interactive activities, videos, resources to send home for parents/guardians, saints' biographies, and more: <https://sophiainstituteforteachers.org/spiritoftruthparishsupplements>.
- ❖ Sadlier, has many resources including activities, review sheets, "question of the week", lives of the saints, resources for connecting the textbook to the liturgical year, and catechist professional development: <https://religion.sadlierconnect.com/anonymous/resources.html> (or Google search "Sadlier Religion Resources").
- ❖ Sadlier also provides *Catechist Café*, a hub of resources to accompany their *We Believe* series. These resources are helpful for any catechist, regardless of the textbook they are using. <http://www.sadlier.com/religion/catechist-cafe>
- ❖ Saint Mary's Press has a similar website for *Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers*: <http://www.smp.org/eSource/CatholicConnections/> (or Google search "Catholic Connections eSource").
- ❖ Other websites that may contain helpful resources are:
  - <http://www.4catholiceducators.com/> (*Resources for Catholic Educators*)
  - <http://catechistcafe.weebly.com> (Diocese of Youngstown's *Catechist Café*)

## **POLICIES**

**Arrival:** Catechists are asked to arrive in the St. Pius V School gym no later than 15 minutes before classes begin (i.e. 11:15 a.m.). The students will meet you in the St. Pius V School Gym at 11:30 a.m. Once your students have arrived, please escort them to your classroom.

**Dismissal:** At 12:45 p.m., please walk the students down to the gym to meet their parents/guardians. Catechists are asked to ensure that each child is picked up by their parent/guardian or another authorized adult. If after five minutes a child has not been picked up by a parent/guardian or other authorized adult, inform Charlie or Amanda.

**Early Dismissal:**

Children may be dismissed early with a note from a parent/guardian. Please send the note to Amanda/Charlie with the attendance sheet.

**Parking:** Catechists and parents/guardians are asked to park in either of the parish parking lots or on the street. One parking lot is located to the right of the school (the schoolyard) and the other is directly across from the school building. Please remind everyone to be careful walking and driving in the lot.

**Cancellations:**

For the safety of parents/guardians, students, and catechists, inclement weather may require the cancellation of faith formation/religious education classes. Cancellations will be communicated via the RI Broadcaster Association and all major local news networks.

**Catechist Absences:**

In the event that you plan to be absent, please inform Amanda/Charlie with as much advanced notice as possible in order for Amanda/Charlie to arrange for a substitute catechist for the day of your absence. Please prepare a lesson plan and provide any materials that will be used during that lesson.

**Last-Minute Catechist Absences (Day before/Day of):**

If an illness or an emergency prevents you at the last minute from coming to class, please call Amanda/Charlie as soon as possible at their GoogleVoice number (401-684-3063). If you cannot reach Amanda/Charlie, please leave a voicemail and/or send a text message. Please indicate where you are in the textbook and if there are any other materials that will be helpful for preparing a last-minute lesson.

**Classroom Attendance:**

Please take attendance at the start of each class using the **Attendance Google Form**. If a student arrives late to class, please change your submission to the Attendance Google Form before 12:45 p.m. Accurate attendance keeping is very important for the safety of our children.

**Mandatory Safe Environment Training:**

All catechists and volunteers in St. Pius V's Faith Formation/Religious Education program must complete Safe Environment training (a 15 minute video) and submit a BCI disclaimer form to be processed by the Diocese of Providence. See Amanda/Charlie for details.

**Class Visits:**

Periodically, Amanda/Charlie will visit each classroom. This is only so they can get to know the students and help you in your ministry as a catechist in any way possible.

**Mandatory Reporting:**

Any comment made to you by a student regarding any kind of abuse or neglect must be reported to Amanda/Charlie immediately. This is the law in Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. All persons who work with children are mandated reporters, and we take this responsibility very seriously.

**Supervision of Children:**

Please do not ever leave a child alone, and do not have a child be alone with you in a classroom or any other location. We are responsible for the safety of the students while they are in our care. Classes may go to the church at any time. Classes may also utilize the schoolyard directly across from the school or the green area to the left of the school. When moving to the church or anywhere else, accompany the class; don't send them ahead. Never leave the class alone. Send a student for materials, copies, messages, or information.

**Property Care & Maintenance:**

St. Pius V Faith Formation/Religious Education students and the students of St. Pius V School share classroom space. We ask that students not bring food or beverages into the school or classroom. If a student damages or destroys property within the classroom or school as a result of intent or carelessness, the student or parent/guardian will be held responsible. Please instruct your students not to touch anything inside the desks and to treat the classroom with respect. Erase the chalkboards/whiteboards before leaving the classroom.

**Bathroom Use:**

Boys' and Girls' Bathrooms are located on the basement floor of St. Pius V School. An adult bathroom is located in the teachers' lounge behind the gym. Water fountains (*bubblers*) and sinks are available at the end of the second floor hallway.

**Allergies/Health Issues:**

Parents/Guardians are asked to provide us with any necessary health, allergy, and medication information about their child. This information is confidential and is given to you only to ensure the child's well-being while he/she is in our care. Please do not share it with anyone. Be especially attentive to allergies. If you are not comfortable with a child's medical situation or have questions, please let Amanda/Charlie know.

**Injuries and Illness during Class:**

If a student becomes ill or is injured in any way, immediately send the injured/ill student to Amanda/Charlie or have another student summon them. You may also contact Amanda/Charlie on their GoogleVoice phone number (401-684-3063).

**Emergency Procedures:**

Every room in St. Pius V School has a chart that shows the appropriate exit and the route to it in case of an emergency. On the first day, make sure that you and all students are familiar with the exit route. When the fire alarm sounds, or in the event of any emergency, vacate the room quickly and quietly. Take your class list with you. Keep the class together outside and away from the building. If possible, have the last person close the classroom door.

**Guest Friars/Sisters:**

If you would like a Dominican Friar or Sister to visit your class, let Amanda/Charlie know. They are happy to meet and spend time with our students.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Catechists are asked to create and foster a positive classroom environment in which growth in the Christian life can take place. Catechists should define acceptable and appropriate behavior during the first class. Students attend faith formation/religious education classes for only 75 minutes a week. They are expected to be attentive and respectful. Discipline should not become an ongoing issue for you or your class. We are here to support you. Do not hesitate to remove a child from your class who is less than attentive, and disrespectful: send the student to Amanda/Charlie. It is our job to deal appropriately with students and parents/guardians.

Here are a few suggestions to help with classroom management:

- ❖ **Be fair and consistent** in enforcement of the rules.
- ❖ **Remind students that they are in attendance to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church, and to learn more about the Faith.** Their behavior should be guided by the Commandments, the Beatitudes, and especially the Golden Rule.
- ❖ **Ask for help.** Send a disruptive or disrespectful student to Charlie and Amanda. Ask Charlie or Amanda to sit in on a class. Talk to Charlie and Amanda, who are both educators at a local Catholic high school, about strategies for correcting student behavior. If the situation warrants it, ask Charlie and Amanda to contact the parent/guardian so that he/she can attend class with the child.
- ❖ **Act quickly.** Don't let a situation get out of hand and take over the class.
- ❖ **Bring any concerns about a student's well-being to the attention of Amanda/Charlie.** In this era of heightened awareness of abuse or neglect of any kind, it is safer to report than to ignore a potential problem or questionable situation.

Catechists handle normal situations that require discipline. However, if a severe or recurring discipline problem occurs, the following steps will be taken:

1. Removal of the student from the classroom
2. Student/Director of Faith Formation conference
3. Director of Faith Formation/Catechist conference
4. Notification of parent(s)/guardian(s) via U.S. mail, telephone, or email by the Director of Faith Formation (First & Second offense)
5. Director of Faith Formation/Catechist/Parent or Guardian conference
6. Notification of student's dismissal from the program via U.S. mail, telephone, or email
7. Due process – Pastor/Director of Faith Formation/Parent or Guardian conference

## **SUPPLIES**

### ❖ **Classroom Supplies:**

Many supplies, including paper, pencils, crayons, etc., are available in the Faith Formation supply closet on the second floor and in the lockers in the gym of St. Pius V School. Ordinarily, the closet and lockers are locked, so please see Amanda/Charlie to gain access. If you would like supplies that are not found in the closet, please let Amanda/Charlie know. We can order them for you. *Staples* has free overnight shipping. If you let us know what you need by the Wednesday prior to class, the supplies can be ready for the Sunday.

### ❖ **Photocopies:**

We are happy to photocopy materials for your class if you request it ahead of time. Please make arrangements with Amanda/Charlie by Thursday morning prior to the Sunday class for which you need the copies.

**THANK YOU FOR SERVING AS A CATECHIST!**



Please be assured of the daily prayers of the Dominican Friars, Dominican Sisters, Dominican Nuns, and the Directors of Faith Formation

HOLY FATHER ST. DOMINIC,  
PRAY FOR US!