



St. Boniface Catholic Church

Faith Formation Handbook

2023 - 2024

St. Boniface Catholic Church

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Discipleship and Evangelization Staff

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The fourth chapter of St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians is a beautiful reflection on the critical role of each of us in the Church, well worth taking time to read, pray with, and meditate on, perhaps together as a family.

In part, Paul writes, "Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the body's growth and builds itself up in love." (Ephesians 4:15-16)

Throughout history, individuals and communities have struggled to coexist without one overpowering the other. Today, our culture seems hyper-focused on individual autonomy as a great good, and yet we are also faced with what the U.S. Surgeon General calls an "epidemic of loneliness and isolation." We may sometimes wonder: is it possible to be part of a strong community without losing a sense of our individual identity?

For St. Paul, and for the Church, the answer is a resounding yes. In fact, we believe we can't have either without the other. God created each of us with our own beautiful and unique combination of gifts that no one else in history has had before, and no one else ever will. Our unity, centered on Christ, is strengthened by the use of our gifts towards building up the whole Church, and our individual gifts are supported and strengthened by those around us making proper use of their own gifts.

As we begin this year of Faith Formation, let's take a moment to explore how we can each use our personal gifts to enter more deeply into the communal life of the Church, whether that be through a liturgical ministry, leading a Parish Life event, joining a small group (launching this winter), or serving in some other way.

The Body of Christ, our body, needs you!

Laura Janas, Director of Discipleship & Evangelization

Faith Formation Schedule

1st Grade - Confirmation
Wednesdays from 6:00 – 7:15pm

September 2023:

15: Kickoff
20: 1st Day of Class
27: Class

October 2023:

4: Class
11: Class
18: No Class
25: Class

November 2023:

1: Mass (All Saints Day)
8: Class
15: Class
22: No Class
29: Class

December 2023:

6: Class
13: Class
20: No Class
27: No Class

January 2024:

3: Class
10: Class

January 2024 cont.:

17: Class
24: Class
31: Class

February 2024:

7: Class
14: Mass (Ash Wed)
21: Class
28: Class

March 2024:

6: No Class
13: Class
20: Class
27: Flex Class

April 2024:

3: Flex Class
10: Class
17: Class
24: Class

May 2024:

1: Class
8: Class
15: Last Class

Additional Noteworthy Dates

Saturday, April 13, 2024: Confirmation (Basilica)

Sunday, April 14, 2024: Confirmation Welcoming

Sunday, April 28, 2024: First Communion

Sunday, May 19, 2024: Baccalaureate



**FAITH
FAMILY
FUN**

FAITH FORMATION KICKOFF 2023

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

4:30 - 6:00PM: ORCHARD ACTIVITIES

Come anytime between 4:30 & 6:00. Check in at the Faith Formation table to receive your wristband for activities. All orchard activities close at 6:00pm.

6:00PM: WELCOME & PRESENTATION

6:30PM: DINNER

**CORN MAZE · WAGON RIDES · ANIMALS
YARD GAMES · CORN PIT · AND MORE!**



**FALL HARVEST ORCHARD
345 COUNTY ROAD 30 SE
MONTROSE, MN 55363**

RSVP by Sunday, September 10 to Laura: ljanas@saintboni.org

*Open to Faith Formation families and all members of the parishes of
St. Boniface and Immaculate Conception*

This event is supported by a grant from:

Catholic United
Financial 

Building up the Family and the Church:

The Church recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children. At baptism, parents are given the commission to “make it your constant care to bring [your child] up in the practice of the faith. See that the divine life which God gives him/her is kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in his/her heart” (Rite of Baptism n.120). Parents are entrusted with the care of their child, not only to provide for their physical needs, but for their spiritual growth, with the primary goal of helping their child reach Heaven.

However, families are not expected to achieve salvation on their own, or in isolation. At baptism, the godparents and the entire Church community are given the task of supporting families and helping the newly baptized child keep the flame of faith burning.

The Sacraments, as efficacious channels of God’s grace, hold a primacy of place in our parish life, and are supported by numerous other opportunities to live out our faith, including Parish Life events, Eucharistic Adoration, days of reflection, faith studies, serving those in need, and community festivals or events.

Our Faith Formation program seeks to support parents in their role of primary educators, and to lift and uphold families as they seek to live out and celebrate the liturgical life of the Church. Our weekly classes are not meant to be the only, or even the primary, source of religious education in the life of a child, but are meant to help enhance and reinforce the formation already occurring in the home (the domestic church) and parish community.

Full Family Participation

To help further enhance the connection between our Faith Formation program, the domestic church, and our parish community, we are asking each family to sign up to co-chair one of our events held throughout the year. Co-chairs will work with another co-chair family, the Parish Culture and Life Committee, and the Director of Discipleship and Evangelization in planning and putting on these events.

Below is a list of events planned for this year, as well as brief descriptions of the help needed for particular events. Please contact Laura at ljanas@saintboni.org when you are ready to sign up for an event to receive additional details. Event sign up is first come, first served.

Faith Formation Kickoff	September 15
Our Lady of the Rosary	October 7
Chili Cookoff	October 14
All Saints Party	October 29
Martinmas	November 11
Feast of Christ the King	November 26
Saints of Advent Party	December 3
Feast of St. Nicholas	December 6
Immaculate Conception	December 8
Epiphany House Blessing Kits	Dec. 23-Jan. 1
Candlemaking for Candlemas	January 28
Candlemas Procession	February 2
Feast of St. Joseph	March 19
Tenebrae	March 27
Seven Churches Visitation	March 28
Hanging Basket Fundraiser (StB)	April & May
Divine Mercy Sunday	April 7
Confirmation Welcoming	April 14
May Crowning	May 5

Corpus Christi Procession	June 2
Feast of St. Boniface	June 2
Blessing of the Bonfire	June 23
Vacation Bible School	Dates TBD
<i>*Dates subject to change*</i>	

Event Descriptions

Faith Formation Kickoff

We kick off our Faith Formation year with a fun evening held at a local orchard. Co-chairs are responsible for helping to line up volunteers and to plan and coordinate the dinner. On the day of the event, volunteers needed include greeters, check-in table, set-up and tear down help, and people to cook and serve the meal.

Rosary Procession

Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary. We celebrate the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary with a rosary procession around the block. Volunteers will help coordinate logistics, line up volunteers to lead each decade and to carry the banner to lead the procession, as well as help provide light refreshments following the procession.

Chili Cookoff

Everyone is invited to taste and vote on their favorite chili and then enjoy a bonfire and social time with a dinner of chili dogs and chili. Co-chairs will help to organize the entrants in the Chili Contest, set up for the event, handle the counting of votes and presentation of results, and event cleanup.

All Saints Party

Takes place on the Sunday closest to November 1st in the St. Boniface school gym.

One of our largest and most popular events of the year! Everyone dresses up as their favorite saint and enjoys an afternoon of saint-themed party games. Co-chairs will begin planning in September.

Responsibilities include working with the Parish Life Committee to choose the games for the year (a list is provided, or you can help come up with new ideas), coordinating volunteers to work each game, ensuring all game materials are prepared, soliciting donations for prizes and food, and helping coordinate set-up, decorations, and tear-down the weekend of the event.

Martinmas (NEW in 2023!)

St. Martin of Tours, patron of soldiers, fittingly has his feast day on November 11th. In Germany and other eastern European countries, children traditionally celebrate his feast by making home-made lanterns and having a lantern-lit procession. We will also create gifts to give to those who attend the Veteran's Brunch at Immaculate Conception.

Saints of Advent Party

Held on a Sunday near the beginning of Advent in the ICC Parish Center

St. Lucy, St. Nicholas, Our Lady of Guadalupe... these are just a few of the amazing saints we celebrate during the season of Advent. Come learn about all of them at one time! Each room of the parish center is dedicated to a different saint. As you move through each room you will learn about the life of that saint, how their feast is celebrated in various cultures around the world, and enjoy crafts, games, activities, or snacks related to that saint. Co-chairs help plan

the activities, line up volunteers for each room, and coordinate set-up and tear down for the event.

Immaculate Conception

We celebrate our parish's feast day and Holy Day of Obligation with 24 hours of Adoration and a potluck following Mass. Co-chairs will help to organize the potluck and recruit adorers to fill the hours of Eucharistic Adoration.

Epiphany House Blessing Kits

The feast of Epiphany is traditionally associated with house blessings - a chance for us to dedicate (or rededicate) our home to the Lord as a place of peace and hospitality, seek His protection from the influence of evil, and invite Him into the minutiae of our daily family life. Co-chairs will help assemble and distribute house blessing kits to parishioners after Mass in the weeks leading up to Epiphany.

Candle Making for Candlemas

February 2nd, the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple 40 days after His birth, is also called Candlemas, in reference to Simeon's prophecy of Jesus as the "light for revelation to the Gentiles." In an old tradition, families would bring their candles to church this day to be blessed and then used in their homes. We gather the Sunday before Candlemas to roll our own candles to be blessed and to enjoy crepes (a French tradition) or a similar food. Co-chairs for this event will oversee organizing the candle craft and the food, as well as set-up and tear down.

Tenebrae (*NEW in 2024!*)

Tenebrae is a Latin word meaning *darkness* or *shadows*. It is a special prayer service occurring the Wednesday of Holy Week that helps prepare us to

fully enter into the Triduum, celebrating the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. Co-chairs will help organize the logistics of this event and help coordinate volunteers.

Seven Churches Visitation

This tradition dates to the 16th century when St. Philip Neri made a pilgrimage to each of the seven major basilicas in Rome on Holy Thursday night. It also has roots in the book of Revelation, in which an angel visits the seven ancient churches. Today, this pilgrimage consists of visiting the altars of repose at seven different churches, spending time at each one praying and meditating on one of the moments of Jesus' arrest. Co-chairs of this event will help contact area churches to compile hours and locations of altars of repose, and then help put together a handout with route options to give to all those making the visitation.

Divine Mercy Sunday

We serve ice cream sundaes after Mass, decorated with an image of Divine Mercy and red and blue sprinkles or berries. Co-chairs oversee setting up, serving, and clean up.

May Crowning

May is the month dedicated to Mary and on the first Sunday of May all children of the parish are invited to join in the May crowning at the beginning of Mass. Co-chairs will coordinate volunteers to help line children up for the procession and procure flowers for the children to carry. May Crowning will occur at both the 9am Mass at Immaculate Conception and the 11am Mass at St. Boniface.

Corpus Christi Procession

On this Feast celebrating the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ we have a Eucharistic Procession around the church block at St. Boniface, followed by 54 hours of continuous Eucharistic Adoration. Co-chairs will help coordinate volunteers to set up the altars at each corner of the block, fill the roles needed for the procession, and help recruit adorers to fill the hours of Eucharistic Adoration.

Feast of St. Boniface

On the Sunday nearest the Feast of St. Boniface (June 5th) we host a large parish picnic! Co-chairs will help coordinate the set-up, meal, decorations, games for kids, and tear down for this event. Food and games are themed around events from the life of St. Boniface (such as him famously chopping down the Oak of Donar) and our parish's German heritage.

Blessing of the Bonfire

Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist

This feast celebrating the birth of St. John the Baptist was traditionally celebrated with a feast of the first fruit of the season and an all-night vigil bonfire. We celebrate with locust or honey themed treats and a bonfire that doesn't quite last all night. Co-chairs will help with set-up, food prep, and tear-down.

Vacation Bible School

Co-chairs will work closely with the Director of Discipleship & Evangelization to plan and coordinate all aspects of VBS. Tasks include recruiting teen and adult volunteers, helping prepare and distribute promotional materials, preparing the schedule of events for each day, decorating the space, and helping to procure and prepare the supplies needed for crafts, snacks, and activities.

General Information

Tuition:

To provide textbooks and other materials for our Faith Formation program, we charge a small fee per student. Parishioners of St. Boniface pay \$80.00 per student with a cap of \$210.00 per family; non-parishioners pay \$130.00 per student with a \$350.00 family cap.

An additional fee of \$70.00 per student is charged for those in sacramental prep years (First Reconciliation/First Communion, Year 1 or 2 Confirmation prep), and does not count towards the family cap.

Severe Weather:

If the local school districts have early dismissal or are closed due to the weather, Faith Formation classes will also be cancelled. If schools are not closed but there are severe weather changes during the day, we will make every attempt to contact schools to make an announcement of our class cancellation. If it is too late to make that announcement, an attempt will be made to contact each home with the information via e-mail. If you question whether or not class will be held, please contact the parish office or Laura Janas. If we do not cancel, please use your own judgement to determine whether it is safe to travel to class or not.

Communication:

Please watch the Sunday bulletin, the parish website, and our parish Facebook page for Faith Formation updates. Flyers and letters will be e-mailed or sent home with your student as needed.

Criminal History Background Checks:

Your child's safety is of the utmost importance to us. All employees as well as all volunteers who have

regular or unsupervised contact with minors are subject to criminal background checks and must attend VIRTUS Training Sessions and sign the volunteer Code of Conduct.

Student Participation:

Our primary goal is to build up Faith, Hope and Love in the students' relationship with The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. Like human relationships, which require the effort of both people to succeed, building our relationship with God requires an investment on our part. The following qualities will help our youth grow in this relationship and will help our catechists maintain a positive learning environment for all:

- A **willingness** to learn, participate, and grow in their faith.
- A family **commitment** to attend Mass on all days of obligation (weekends and Holy Days), and to follow the Precepts of the Church.
- A **great respect** for the dignity of others and their property, with a particular respect for catechists and other adult leaders.
- A spirit of **gratitude** for all of God's gifts, especially for the gift of His Church, and for those who lead and guide us in the Faith throughout our lives.
- An **attentive responsibility** for one's work and actions.

Classroom Guidelines:

- Food and drink (with the exception of water bottles) are not allowed on a regular basis. Students should ask their catechist's permission ahead of time before bringing food or drink into the classroom.

- Cell phones, other electronic devices, toys, games, and the like are NOT allowed in the classroom. If these items are brought to class, teachers will collect them in a basket and return them to students at the end of class.
- Students should thoroughly complete any homework assignments given by their catechists.
- For safety and liability reasons, there are **no visitors** without prior approval from the Director of Discipleship and Evangelization.

Drop off and pick up:

Our Faith Formation classes are held in the St. Boniface school building (8801 Wildwood Avenue) just down the hill from the Church. Drop off and Pick up will take place using Door 1 of the school building. (On rare occasions, drop off and pickup may occur in the Church – families will be notified ahead of time if this is the case). Wildwood Avenue can be busy and visibility difficult, particularly in the dark of winter. If your child is in fourth grade or below, please come inside to the gym to collect your child at the end of the night.

Dress Code Policy:

All students and catechists are expected to dress in a fashion that represents modesty and good taste, respecting others and our Lord. Clothing must cover all undergarments and midriffs. Clothing that displays profane or offensive messages or images is not allowed. Violators will be asked to change at the discretion of a catechist or St. Boniface staff member. Parents will also be notified and reminded of the proper dress code.

Attendance:

Attendance is taken at each class. Please contact the Faith Formation office to discuss any potential conflicts with the class schedule.

The consistent presence and participation of each child is vital to the success of our Faith Formation program. If your child will be absent from class, please notify the Faith Formation office no later than the Monday prior to class for planned absences, and as soon as possible for unplanned absences (illness, serious family emergency, etc.). Phone calls will be made to parents of children marked absent and not excused.

If a student misses a class, for any reason, make up work will be assigned according to the content of the missed class. Frequent absences or unsatisfactorily completed make up assignments will be monitored, and if a pattern of missing work is observed, a meeting will be set up between the student, parents, and parish staff to work out a correction plan.

Students will not be permitted to leave class early without permission from their parents or guardians.

Discipline Policy:

If a student fails to follow the rules outlined above, or other rules implemented by his/her catechist, he/she will be asked to leave the classroom and sit with a hall monitor or office assistant. This discipline violation will be discussed by the student, catechist, and parish staff member. Upon a second violation, both the student's parents and Fr. Peter will be notified. Upon a third violation, there will be a meeting with Father, the student, and his/her parents to draw up a probation contract.

