

St. Bridget Catholic Church

Elementary Faith Formation



2024-2025 Parent Handbook

Parents, Relatives, and Guardians,

The family is the foundation and primary means of faith formation. Please stay active in your child's faith formation by:

- **Attending Mass as a family every week.** The material covered in our classes references Mass often, and the assumption is made that the children are attending Mass. Make both Mass and religious education a priority; children quickly pick up on your actions and attitude.
- **Praying as a family.** Show your child that praying is important by letting them see you pray, encouraging them to pray, and praying as a family. Pray for special intentions as they come up.

Praying before a meal or bedtime works well for many families. The following prayers are key prayers to teach your children and practice/recite together:

- Sign of the Cross
- Hail Mary
- Act of Contrition
- Glory Be (Doxology)
- Our Father



Catholic Prayers:

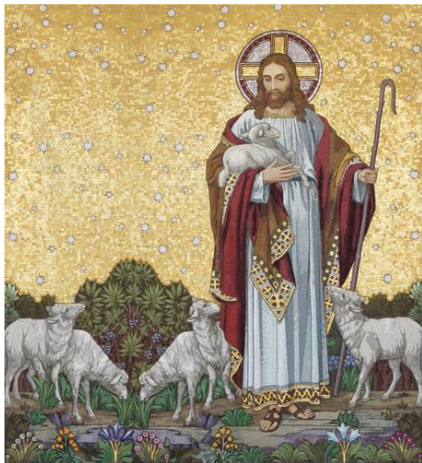
<http://www.usccb.org/catholic-prayers>

Loyola Press Family Prayer Resources:

<http://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources>

Arrival and Dismissal

- **Sharing your faith with your child.** Tell them about your childhood church and home experiences. Talk about your faith and relationship with the Lord. It is important that they hear about your journey!
- **Reviewing class material.** After class, discuss the *Finding God* lesson with your child. Ask, "What did you learn today?" Don't take "Nothing" for an answer—ask interactive questions. At-home materials will be available for families.
- **Reading the Bible together.** Follow the daily readings with the worldwide Church. Daily Scripture readings can be found at the US Conference of Catholic Bishops website: www.bible.usccb.org
- **Volunteering as a teacher, aide or substitute in the classroom.** We do not have a substitute teacher pool. Parents will be asked to fill in when a teacher or aide needs to miss a class. Please say yes when called on, so the classes can continue uninterrupted.



- Please drop off children at the classroom with their teacher. Make sure the catechists are present before leaving your child. **Never leave your child unattended in a classroom or drop them off unattended anywhere at the elementary school building, including the playground.**
- Please make yourself known to the teachers. Also, explain any carpool setups so that our teachers know who to expect for pickup time. Our policy is to dismiss children to adults or older (driving age) youth.
- Parents should pick up their children from the classroom. Do not ask your child to come to the car after class. If you are unable to come in to pick up a child, let us know so that we can work out a way to assist you.
- If you need to pick up your child early, please notify your teacher(s) before Sunday.
- Children must be supervised **at all times**, either under the supervision of parents or of teachers.
- Even though you and your children may feel at home at St. Bridget, it is important for us to be ever vigilant in providing safety measures—thank you for your support and cooperation. Please let us know if there is a safety concern that needs attention.

Special Needs

- Special Needs Parents are requested to list any health concerns of a student on the Medical Release form. This information will be communicated to the appropriate catechists.
- Also, parents are requested to list any special needs of a student with learning disabilities on the registration form, and this information will also be communicated to the appropriate catechists.



Attendance

- We know that children's schedules are busy, yet you have made Faith Formation a priority for your family. Their attendance is of utmost importance for their ability to grasp and follow the weekly curriculum.
- **Please notify your catechists as soon as you know your child will miss a session due to illness or a family emergency**, so they can work with you on helping to get your child caught up before the next session.
- Should your child have too many absences (more than 3), it may mean that your child will need to repeat the year in order to get a full understanding of the material. We will take into consideration the reasons for the absences and what has been done to catch up with missed lessons.

Classroom rules

We ask for all attending to follow the "Golden Rule" and treat one another with respect, creating an accepting and open place to share. Normal discipline problems are to be handled by the classroom catechist. Behavior that is disrespectful of anyone will not be tolerated.

- *First Warning* – the error will be pointed out and the child will be told not to repeat the behavior.
- *Second Warning* – the child will be moved from his/her seat to either be seated near a catechist or isolated from others in the room.
- *Third or Multiple Warning(s)* – the parent may be called to collect the child and may need to accompany the child to the next session to ensure his/her proper behavior. The DRE will contact the parent to discuss the situation.

School Property

- Respect for school and parish property is expected in every area of the building. Children are required to walk (not run) in school corridors and classrooms for their safety. Food and gum are not allowed in any classroom or building unless it is part of the class program and under the authority of the teachers.
- Please remind your children **to not touch or take anything out of classroom desks**. Supplies will be provided by the catechists for classroom use. Items inside of the desks belong to the students enrolled at the St. Bridget School and are private property.

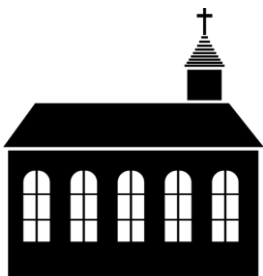
Communication

The catechists and DRE will primarily communicate to parents through email. Please check email before Sunday for updates, news, or other information about the class.

Please keep cell phones nearby during class time (10:30am-11:30am) in case teachers need to contact you.

Like and Follow us on Facebook:

- www.facebook.com/rvasaintbridget
- In the event of inclement weather, cancellations will be shared on Facebook and our parish website, www.saintbridgetchurch.org



Calendar Changes

If the calendar is changed, you will receive written notice with your child and an emailed notice will be sent to each parent.

Lost Articles

Please notify the DRE if a child's item is missing. Lost articles (jackets, water bottles, etc.) will be kept in the DRE's office.

Faith Formation Schedule

- 10:30-11:30am, Elementary School classrooms
- Full calendar and other resources available at: <http://www.saintbridgetchurch.org/Children>

Curriculum

Loyola Press, *Finding God*. Parent resources available at: <http://www.loyolapress.com/faith-formation/finding-god/finding-god-2021/parents-and-students/>

Staff Contact

Michael Mitchell, Director of Religious Education
Email: mmitchell@saintbridgetchurch.org
Phone: (804) 525-7903

Safe Environment

For the safety and protection of all children, we will ensure that all catechists:

- Complete a background screening
- Attend a session on "Protecting God's Children" (VIRTUS)



Weekend Mass times

Sun - 7:30am, 9am, 11am

Sat. Vigil - 5:30pm

Visit our website, www.saintbridgetchurch.org, for full calendars and parish schedule.