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Faith Formation Families and Volunteers

8/18/21

Introduction

As we prepare for a new faith formation year, we recognize that COVID-19 still poses risks for our community. At the same time, circumstances are different from last year. As we maintain vigilance, our program will still need to implement a health and safety plan to mitigate the spread of all infectious diseases, including COVID-19. We are closely watching all public health recommendations, along with guidance from the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, and implementing those that will best serve our students, volunteers and the entire community.

As you read through this plan, please know that our focus is on our students and balancing the needs of their safety as well as providing a positive environment for their growth in their faith journey.

Mitigation Strategies

While our situation is different today than one year ago, we continue to be committed to maintaining the health and safety of our students & volunteers. Here are some of the strategies we will have in place this upcoming Faith Formation year.

Staying Home When Sick

We continue to require all individuals to stay home when they are sick. We are asking all parents to do a health check before sending your child to class each week.

Lab-Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

If your child has tested positive for COVID-19, we will require that they not participate in Faith Formation activities until they are no longer contagious. This means:

- They feel better. Their cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are substantially improved.
- It has been at least 10 days since they first felt sick or tested positive for COVID-19.
- They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fevers.

Vaccination

We are grateful to the medical community who worked tirelessly to develop a safe and effective vaccine for COVID-19. We know many people have chosen for good reasons to get this vaccine for themselves and their families. We also know that some others, following their own good reasons, have chosen not to be vaccinated. Students who have chosen to be vaccinated, are allowed to continue to attend Faith Formation despite exposure, as long as they are presenting no symptoms and with proof of vaccination.

Quarantine

If your student has been told to quarantine due to an exposure to a positive case of COVID-19, please contact the parish office for them to be excused from Faith Formation until their quarantine is over. For exposed, non-vaccinated, students who do not get a test, we require a 14-day quarantine. For exposed, non-vaccinated, students who do not have symptoms and receive a negative test we will move to a seven-day quarantine.

Physical Distancing

We will not require teachers to space students six feet apart this year. Some rooms may have tables set up and we will allow teachers to put desks in groups if they choose.

Face Coverings in the School Building

Last year, the Governor through an Executive Order required all individuals to wear face coverings indoors at all public & non-public school buildings. That legal mandate ended over the summer.

For the start of the 2021-2022 Faith Formation year, we are putting the decision for a child to wear a face covering in the hands of each student's parents or guardians. We ask all parents and guardians to consider what is best for their child in making this decision while also being vigilant in the monitoring of symptoms and health of their child. Volunteer Catechists will also make their own decision about face coverings. We know that there are a variety of positions and opinions about the use of masks, so we will be working diligently to eliminate any bullying or stigmatization for choosing to wear, or not wear, a mask. We ask that you help us in this goal. Focusing on the needs of the students, we do reserve the right to ask students to wear a mask if this will promote student safety and allow for continuation of in-person instruction.

Closing

We are excited to welcome your children back into the classroom this year. In conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Health and the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, we will be monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic closely and will be promptly communicating any updates to this plan. Please remember that this plan is fluid and can change as circumstances change.

We need your support. We are grateful to be able to be easing masking and distancing restrictions. We need you to keep students home when they are sick. Communicate with us when your student may be excluded for symptoms or close contact, and we will get you the necessary information to keep them up to date with the rest of their peers.

We are honored and blessed to serve your children and look forward to the new Faith Formation year ahead.

Sr. Tresa Margaret and Sarah Nauer
Director of Faith Formation

Fr. Mike Tix
Parochial Administrator