



Welcome to the Holy Family Parish 2025-2026 Faith Formation Program

Angie Goodwin
Director of Religious Education / Youth Minister
319-936-3386
riversideholyyfamilyym@diodav.org

"Let the little children come to me." In Christ's own words we are beckoned to draw closer to Him. It is in this spirit that the Holy Family Parish Formation Program strives to find each "little one" where he/she is and encourage them to take steps closer to God.

This handbook contains information concerning details of the Holy Family Parish Faith Formation Program for children, teens and adults, as well as, our Sacramental Preparation Programs.



HOLY FAMILY PARISH FORMATION PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

We promote knowledge of our faith

We catechize Church teachings
We catechize facts about Jesus, Scripture, and Liturgy

We promote Christian moral formation

We encourage discipleship
We stimulate Christian attitudes and behaviors

We promote prayer and worship

We emphasize the importance of the Mass and the Sacraments
We invite students to have a deeper relationship with Jesus



Role of the Parents

Parents are the primary educators in the faith. Together with them... all members of the family play an active part in the education of the younger members... The family is defined as the "domestic Church"...
General Directory for Catechesis, #255

We believe that formation in Catholic Christianity employs a partnership between parents and the parish. While the parish can provide formal formation in faith, we encourage, and provide support for, parents to take an active role in their children's ongoing faith development. Our Catholic tradition sees weekly participation in the Mass to be an essential practice for this to take place.

Role of the Catechist

Catechists in our Faith Formation Program are Catholic persons of faith who volunteer their time and talent to share that gift of faith with the youth of the parish. Catechists strive to build up a community spirit among the youth which will strengthen and nourish them, and which will call them to discover, internalize, proclaim, and live the Gospel message, and to grow in faith.

GENERAL REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Information regarding the Faith Formation Programs is emailed and/or mailed in the Spring to all eligible parish members for the following catechetical year. Additionally, program announcements will appear in the Sunday bulletin. Registration for the 2025/26 catechetical year will commence on or about June 1st. To facilitate program planning and material ordering registration forms for the 2025/26 Catechetical year are due no later than August 15th.

REGISTRATION

Registration for Faith Formation Programs will be accepted by completing the 2025/26 Registration Form, signing the policy agreement and returning it by mail, in the Sunday offertory collection basket, or in person. Registration is also available on-line registration by visiting the HFP website at [.https://clusterparishes.org/](https://clusterparishes.org/).

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration tuition & fees cover only a fraction of the total cost of the Faith Formation Program. The remainder of the program fees are covered by the parish through our stewardship of treasure provided via parish envelopes. In September 2025, registered households will receive a statement of the Tuition & Fees due.

*****No family is turned away because of an inability to pay.*****

Faith Formation Tuition:

	Registration
K-9th per child	\$25
K-9th per family	\$40

All fees are to be turned in at the time of registration, unless a payment plan has been arranged.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP



Financial hardships should never prevent a family from registering their children in the Faith Formation Program. Financial assistance is available for those who demonstrate a need. All information shared will be kept in strict confidence.

To discuss financial assistance, please contact Angie Goodwin. A Financial Assistance Request form will be made available to you, or you can download one from the Parish website <https://clusterparishes.org/>. Because fees are a direct cost to the parish, families are asked to cover as much of them as possible. Payment options are available.

CATECHIST MINISTRY COMMITMENT

Catechetical volunteer positions have different time and talent obligations as required by their specific catechetical process. One way we thank volunteers who share their time and talent for the entire catechetical year is to waive all registration fees.

GENERAL GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

DROP OFF AND PICK UP SAFETY INFORMATION:

To ensure the safety of our children, we ask all parents to follow our established drop off and pick up procedure as follows:

- Students should enter the building immediately upon arrival for their safety.
- Park your car and come into the building to pick up your child.
- Children will be instructed to wait in the entrance way or in the building under supervision.

ABSENCE FROM CLASS

We are responsible for students during the time they are registered for our program. Therefore, we must keep accurate attendance and tardiness records on file in the Faith Formation Office. When a child is absent, please call and leave a message in the Faith Formation Coordinator or teacher that your child(ren) will not be attending.

CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event that school is called off for Highland or Mid-Prairie Schools due to weather conditions, there will be no Faith Formation classes for that evening. If the HFP Faith Formation Commission determines that conditions are unsafe, cancellation information will be communicated by 5:00p.m. on Social Media page, an email will be sent to families and it will be announced on KCRG & KCII radio.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Parent contact information and alternate contact information must be provided on the registration form. In the event a child becomes ill or is injured during class, every effort will be made to contact the parents or guardians first. If parents cannot be reached in a timely manner, the alternate emergency contact(s) will be notified. If any of this information changes throughout the year, please inform the Faith Formation DRE.

MEDICAL NEEDS/ ALLERGIES AND HEALTH CONCERNS

Parents must indicate on the registration form student's allergies and any other health problems which may help us better meet his/her safety needs during class time. Allergy information will be shared with catechists/volunteers. If a student is required to keep on his/her person, personal inhalers or other medicines or medical equipment, the parent must indicate this information on the registration form and complete a medication release form.

CELL PHONE & RIGHT TO INSPECT POLICY

Students who text messages during class will be given a verbal reminder to turn off their cell phone. At the next offense, the cell phone will be taken away and returned to the student after class. If a student is suspected of having weapons or drugs in his/her possession, the DRE is required to investigate. HFP reserves the right to search and seize drugs, weapons and other contraband when there is reasonable belief that such contraband is in the possession of a student or volunteer.

INCLUSIVE AND SPECIAL NEEDS FAITH FORMATION

By right of baptism, all Catholics should receive the benefit of the appropriate sacraments. In the Holy Family Formation program, no child will be denied sacramental preparation and the opportunity for spiritual enrichment. We are committed to serve children with special needs and their families with programming and formational opportunities deemed appropriate for the individual. We believe that each child should have the opportunity to build a relationship with God at his/her level. The opportunity is provided on the registration form to specify any special needs a student might have. These include special learning needs or disabilities. These needs will be shared with catechists and other volunteers when deemed necessary and appropriate. Every effort will be made to accommodate all children and youth in our programs.

FAITH FORMATION HOMESCHOOLING

Generally, the catechesis of children takes place in parish religious education/faith formation programs. The Faith is to be shared in a community context. However, there may be unique circumstances that prevent that full participation, and families may choose to provide formal systematic catechesis for their children in the home.

The Church, catechetical leaders, catechists, and parents all realize that much (if not most,) education in faith takes place outside a classroom setting - in the family, in the neighborhood, in the parish community. It is in these settings that children see and experience the lived faith.

The Diocese of Davenport does not allow homeschooling for sacramental preparation. Children preparing for sacraments of initiation must be prepared for the sacraments in the parish.

The Holy Family Faith Formation program will work to support and assist any family in their decision. If you home school your child(ren) and would like more information or when/how one would go about coordinating the reception of sacraments for your child(ren) in our parish, please contact Angie Goodwin or Deacon Derick Cranston in the Faith Formation Office at 319-648-2331.

SAFEGUARDING ALL GOD'S FAMILY POLICY

For Students:

As mandated, the diocese requires that all students attend a presentation on ways to keep themselves safe. This will be offered during class time during the catechetical year. Parents will be given the opportunity to preview the information presented. These presentations will reinforce our belief in the respect and dignity of each human person and help children be more aware of what constitutes a safe boundary among family, friends, and strangers.

Pursuant to state law and the diocesan Safe Environment Policy, we are required to report suspected child abuse and we will follow the state laws and diocesan policy on such matters.

For Parents:

At the Opening Parent Meeting and throughout the year, parents will be provided with Safeguarding All God's Family information. The information presented is useful in keeping family members safe from child predators, as well as pertinent information regarding bullying, INTERNET safety, and other topics.

For Catechists and all Volunteers:

All volunteers must have an interview with Director of Faith Formation. Criminal and personal background checks are done and safe environment training is completed before a volunteer is allowed to minister in the Christian Formation Program.

EMERGENCY PLANS

LOCKDOWN PLAN

In the unlikely event of an intruder, the catechists will lock/secure their classroom doors and all students and catechists will remain in the classroom until they are informed by the Director of Faith Formation and/or other official authority that it is safe to unlock the classroom doors. When the authorities deem it safe to do so, the classroom catechists will ensure the safe dismissal of each student to their parents on the sign out sheet.

FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

In the unlikely event of a fire, catechists will pick up the communication folder and walk the children out to the assigned area for their classroom as indicated on the map by the classroom door. The catechists will take roll upon arriving at their designated location and will indicate the safe dismissal of each student to their parents on the sign out sheet.

WEATHER OR NATURAL DISASTER ACTION PLAN

In the unlikely event of a severe storm or tornado, catechists will pick up the communication folder and walk the children to the assigned area for their classroom as indicated on the map by the classroom door. The catechists will take roll upon arriving at their designated location and will follow safety procedure/protocol.



BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Following Jesus' command, "Love one another as I have loved you", our Faith Formation staff and students treat each other with mutual respect. To create an environment that promotes Christian values and behaviors, and which creates a positive learning space, all students, catechists and guests must abide by the Faith Formation behavior guidelines.

General rules for all program participants:

- Respect all people and the property of others.
- Behave in a courteous manner.
- Take good care of church property.
- Settle disagreements in a peaceful manner

Specific Behavior Guidelines:

1. Respect and courtesy toward directors, catechists, and other students is expected at all times.
2. Students are not to enter their classrooms until an adult is present.
3. Students are not to remove any items from the desks they are using, or tamper with property of Holy Family Parish.
4. Classes will start promptly at the designated time.
5. Young people not involved in the program are not allowed in or around the building when programs are meeting.
6. Students are expected to bring their religion textbook and/or materials/folders to class each week.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In order to maintain an atmosphere of learning and growth in faith, the following process for disciplinary action will be observed:

FIRST OCCASION

The catechist will speak to the student privately concerning his/her behavior. Students may be sent to see the program director for disruptive behavior.

SECOND OCCASION

The catechist will call the parents and notify the director that the parents have been contacted.

THIRD OCCASION

The catechist and director may determine that the student shall not be allowed to return to class until the catechist, program director and parents have met with the student. Any student who has been sent to meet with the director two times for disruptive behavior may not return to the class until such a meeting has taken place.

A student who continues negative behavior following steps 1-3 will be dismissed from the program for the current year at the discretion of the program director. Options for home study will be offered to parents/guardians. Students dismissed the previous year may not re-enter the program without first having a meeting with the director.

GENERAL SACRAMENT PREPARATION GUIDELINES



Sacraments are expressions of faith and essential to what it means to live as a Catholic Christian. Our sacrament preparation processes are created to be opportunities for children and parents to grow in faith and learn or deepen their understanding of the sacrament and the graces received in the sacramental ritual and how they can help one to live as disciples of Jesus.

Families must be registered members of Holy Family Parish. Participation in Sacrament Preparations by members of other parishes must be accompanied by a letter of permission from the Pastor of their home parish or meet with Pastor/Deacon to access acceptance to the program.

Sacrament preparation is separate from the regular faith formation process for children and youth.

PARENTAL ROLE

At their child's Baptism, parents agreed to be the primary educators of their child in the faith by word and example. Therefore, parents are expected to work in partnership with the Church to help their children prepare to celebrate the sacraments.

- ✓ To participate in a sacrament preparation process complete involvement of the child and his/her parent(s) is mandated as required in each preparation process.
- ✓ **All parent meetings incorporated into a sacrament preparation processes are mandatory.** If a parent cannot attend, a delegate such as a grandparent, uncle, aunt, etc. may be sent to receive the necessary information.
- ✓ The Faith Formation Program will advertise the sacrament schedule in their calendars and updated process information in the bulletin, newsletters and web site. It is the parent's responsibility to read these communications and keep informed as to when a process begins and all the requirements within the process.

MASS ATTENDANCE

The Eucharistic celebration is the 'source and summit' of our faith. At Mass "we participate in the Paschal Mystery of Christ, that is, in his dying and rising which is made present for us in the Eucharistic sacrifice." (USCCA Ch 17) Through our participation in this paschal process, we are transformed with the bread and wine into the Body of Christ to bring Christ's message of peace and love into the world. **To be adequately prepared to celebrate the sacraments, children and youth should attend Mass weekly.**



PROOF OF BAPTISM

Proof of Baptism is required and must be turned in at registration for a sacrament preparation process. Proof of Baptism of the candidate is required and consists of original Baptismal Certificate or photo copy. All original documents will be returned. Copies from other parishes may be sent directly to the Holy Family Parish Office at P.O.Box C, 360 N. Washburn St., Riverside, IA 52327.

Individuals baptized in an accepted non-Catholic Christian ecclesiastic community, will make a profession of faith prior to preparing for the sacraments.

Sacramental Preparation First Reconciliation

The sacrament of Reconciliation is first celebrated with children in 2nd grade. It is preferred that one full year of Catholic faith formation has been completed prior to enrolling. Preparation is held in the fall/winter. Parents and children attend preparation sessions together to become more aware of the forgiveness which is ours through Jesus Christ.

Sacramental Preparation First Communion

Through the preparation process, children in 2nd grade or higher and their families deepen their understanding of this sacred mystery. It is preferred that one full year of Catholic faith formation has been completed prior to enrolling. Preparation is held in the spring. Parents and children attend preparation sessions together. The true presence of Christ in the Eucharist is highlighted and children are taught the proper way to receive Jesus in Holy Communion.

Sacramental Preparation Confirmation

Along with Baptism and Eucharist, Confirmation is a sacrament of Christian Initiation. It represents a sealing of Baptism and the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Confirmation program is designed to help our young people to explore, deepen and strengthen the seeds of faith they were given at baptism. The candidates, themselves, are choosing the Catholic faith as a way of life.

The preparation process is designed for 9th/10th grade students. The purpose of the program is as follows:

- To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ
- To encourage them to participate in the life, mission, and work of the Church
- To promote their spiritual growth

The candidate must:

- Participate in two years of formal religious education in either parochial school or a parish Religious Education Program in 9th and 10th grade.
- Be knowledgeable about the basic teachings of our Faith.
- Participate FULLY in the Parish Confirmation Program
- Attend and participate in class and attend Mass on Sundays
- Participate in the service projects requirements
- Participate in at least one youth group event

Rite of Christian Initiation for Children

Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC) is for children between the Ages of 7 and 16, and who have reached 2nd grade age, whether baptized or unbaptized. Children preparing to receive the Sacraments they have missed since Baptism, or to join the Catholic Church through Baptism, will attend sacramental preparation sessions in addition to Christian Formation classes on a regular basis beginning in September and continuing through the Easter Season. The process enables children to enter into a relationship with God and share in the life of their identity as Children of God. The importance of weekly Mass will be stressed as will understanding the parts of the Mass.

Each family comes to the process with different needs. The children will be of various ages and have had different levels of previous instruction. Families will meet with the Director of Faith Formation to determine the preparatory needs of the family. Every child will need a Sponsor/Godparent. The Sponsor/Godparent will be someone other than a parent, who will support the child in his or her Catholic Journey. The sponsor must be a Baptized and Confirmed Catholic, who is over the age of 16, and is in good standing with the Catholic Church. The sponsor will fill out a sponsor registration form.

Elementary Faith Formation Grades K-8th

Elementary & middle school Faith Formation at Holy Family Parish is designed for all children attending a public school in grades K5 – 8. Classes are held in the Education Center and taught by volunteer catechists who receive training to enable them to share our Catholic faith in an effective way.

In Kindergarten through 8th grade, will utilize the *Sadlier; Christ In Us*, Bible based curriculum. Filled with exciting, energetic learning that will get your kids out of their seats as they excitedly dive into the Bible and the teachings of the Church! Each child receives their own activity book, containing everything they need for their exciting faith journey. Children will dive into Bible stories in the curriculum to encounter Jesus through the stories and people of scripture. Then, they get out of their seats for a built-in energetic learning activity that helps build a meaningful lesson. Next, they connect the Bible story and hand-on activity with Catholic doctrine through age-appropriate prayers, puzzles, and challenges in their Activity Book.

High School Faith Formation Grades 9-10th

The Holy Family Faith Formation program provides an opportunity for High School students in grades 9th through 10th to grow in faith by developing a meaningful relationship with Jesus, a better understanding of our Catholic tradition and help to plant roots for the adult years. This program includes instruction, fellowship, prayer, service, and fun. The Youth Ministry program also provides opportunities for youth to engage in service, social and retreat opportunities throughout the year.

Two years of High School Christian Formation classes are required of any young person, not enrolled in a Catholic High School before they receive the Sacrament of Confirmation..

9th & 10th Grade Curriculum:

- **2025/26**

My Catholic Life! Series: This series was written as a complete summary of our glorious Catholic faith. The goal of this series is to answer the difficult and deep questions of life in a personal, clear and understandable way by faithfully summarizing the entire Catechism of the Catholic Church. We need to know who we are and what life is all about. We need to know who God is and what He has spoken to us through the ages. The Lord has entrusted these answers to our Catholic Church and the Church, through the Catechism, has handed it on to you.