

St. Patrick's Parish Faith Formation Policy Handbook

Sidney, NE 69162



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Faith Formation
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Revised 2019

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St. Patrick's Faith Formation Mission Statement

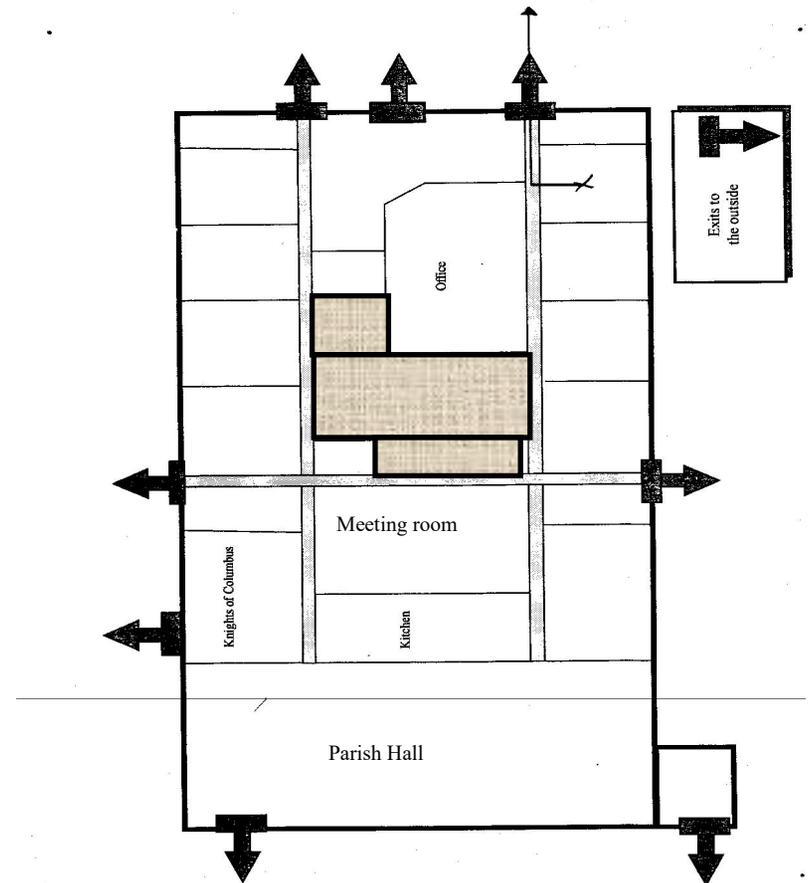
St. Patrick's Parish Community will provide a safe environment for people to grow in faith and build relationships in a community guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church. The entire parish is needed in carrying out this mission.

St. Patrick's Faith Formation Goals

- To empower people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today
- To draw people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community
- To foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each person

Adapted from Renewing the Vision: a Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry, National Conference of Catholic Bishops. Copyright 1997

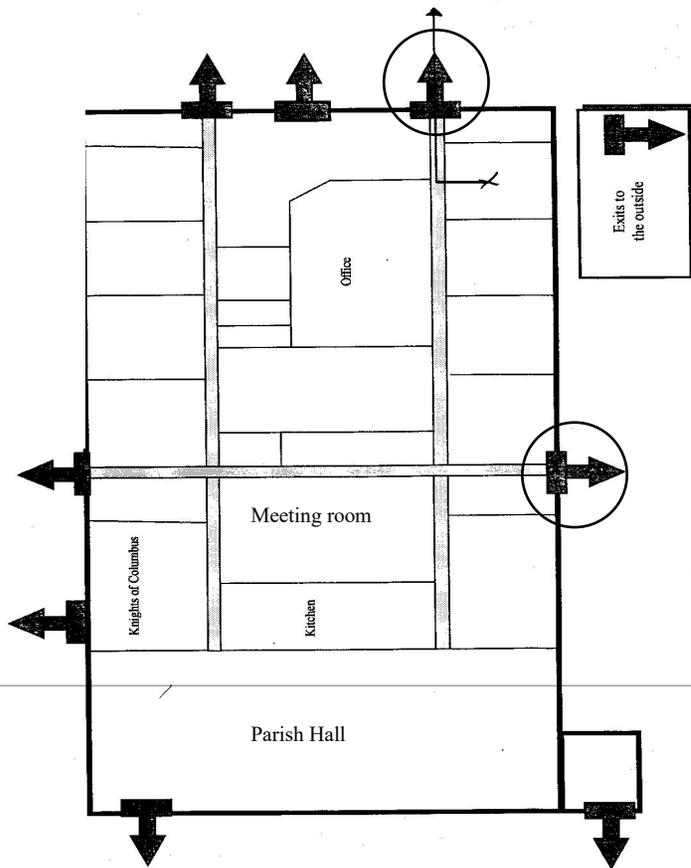
Tornado Shelter Map



If the tornado siren should sound, catechists shall take a current roster with them to the designated shelter area, marked by gray boxes above.

If in use, the youth room in the church basement will enter the closet within that room or move to the interior hallway of the basement where no windows are located.

Fire Evacuation Map



Each classroom has a map posted with an exit route marked. The upstairs room will exit out either door circled based upon which stairwell is not blocked and available for exit. Catechists shall take a current roster with them to the church and sit together as a class.

If in use, the youth room in the church basement will exit out of the north door of the church if possible and meet in the parish center.

Classes who exit the parish center will meet in the body (main part) of the church.

Role of the Pastor

Oversees Faith Formation program; provides Sacramental opportunities to the program; consults with the Faith Formation staff and committee.

Role of the Parish

The general role of the parish is to encourage the success of the programs and activities, and to give full support to directors, catechists, and others working with the programs.

Role of the Directors of Faith Formation

The general role of the directors is to set goals, provide leadership and supervision, and develop and conduct a program which fosters and enhances the personal and spiritual growth of each person.

Specific roles include:

- recruit, screen and train catechists, and assistants
- supervise and support catechists, and assistants
- implement and comply with Diocesan and parish policies including the Safe Environment policy
- evaluate self, catechists, assistants and programs to determine if goals are being met

Role of the Catechists

The general role of the catechist is to:

- A. Empower children/youth to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.
- B. To draw children/youth to responsible participation in the life, mission, work of the Catholic faith community.
- C. Foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each child/young person.

Adapted from "Renewing the Vision, A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry" from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Specific roles include:

- attend training and in-service sessions provided
- be present for class and activities as scheduled or make prior arrangements with the Director of Faith Formation to ensure a substitute has been scheduled
- plan lessons prior to each class
- follow the content provided in the text
- incorporate prayer as a standard component of each class
- follow discipline policies
- comply with all diocesan and parish policies including the Safe Environment policy
- read, sign and return to the directors the volunteer application, criminal records and background release authorization and disclosure form, criminal records and background release authorization and disclosure background questionnaire form, and the volunteer code of conduct form

Safety

Emergency Plan

See building safety routes posted in each classroom. Fire and tornado drills will be conducted within the school year. When the fire signal is sounded, everyone must leave the building by the prescribed route and meet at the church. See map on page 10 for fire evacuation routes.

When the tornado siren is sounded everyone is to proceed to the assigned shelter area and remain there until the all clear is given. See map on page 11 for tornado shelter area.

In the event of any evacuation, catechists shall take a current roster with them. When the signal is given it is essential that everyone behave in an orderly and quiet manner. Each participant/catechist should familiarize him/herself with the exit route.

Illness and Injury

If a youth becomes ill or injured, parents/guardians will be notified promptly.

Release from Class/Special Events

It is imperative for the safety of the youth, staff and volunteers that the following dismissal policies are adhered to and that youth are picked up on time.

Please be aware that children may not watch for moving cars in parking lot.

Special Events and Occasions

In any event requiring children/youth to be taken off the parish property:

- the parents/guardians will be initially informed and required to sign and return a permission form
- if permission form is not returned the child/youth will not be able to attend the activity
- the program shall adequately provide for the safety of the child/youth
- the program will provide or arrange for adequate and safe transportation

Cancellation of classes/events:

In the event of inclement weather, cancellations of Wednesday evening faith formation classes/youth ministry events will be announced on the local radio station, KSID radio, by 5:00 p.m. It will also be posted on our website: sidneystpats.com, Sidney St. Patrick's Church Facebook page, and a message through our parish app will be sent. If the schools in the Sidney school district are closed during the school day due to inclement weather, it is understood that all faith formation classes/youth ministry events for that day/evening are cancelled as well.

Right to Amend

The Faith Formation staff and Pastor retain the right to amend this policy handbook for just cause. Parents/guardians will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

Parent/Youth Agreement

We ask that parents and children/youth read this policy together to ensure clear understanding of its content and that the parents and children/youth agree to abide by its content.

Role of the Parents/Guardians

The general role of the parents is to understand that their child's primary faith development begins at home.

Specific roles include:

- extend their full support to catechists and confirmation ministry team members
- know and understand the goals, guidelines and expectations of the program
- encourage child to attend class and activities regularly, and to abide by the guidelines and expectations
- read with youth (grades 7-12), sign and return the Youth Code of Conduct

Parents are welcomed to visit classrooms.

Parents need to have specific arrangements for getting child/youth to and from faith formation class and other activities on time, and to communicate those arrangements with their child.

Role of the Children/Youth

Specific roles include:

- understand and abide by the guidelines and expectations set forth by the directors and catechists
- attend class on a regular basis and arrive at class and activities on time
- show respect to catechist, fellow classmates, and all others involved
- show full cooperation and participation at all times
- read with parents/guardian, sign and return the Youth Code of Conduct (7-12)

Discipline Policies

Youth conduct:

The following conduct by youth is prohibited in the church, on church property or at any faith formation or youth function:

- Possession, use of or being under the influence of any illicit drugs, alcohol or any intoxicant of any kind*
- Smoking, chewing or possession of tobacco products by anyone under the legal age of 18*
- Willful destruction or damage to church property*
- Stealing of church property or stealing of private property belonging to another*
- Possession or use of any object or chemical that can reasonably be considered a weapon*
- Conduct that materially and substantially disrupts the right of others to an education
- Other rules deemed appropriate

**Indicates immediate out of class/activity suspension*

Consequences:

- Any violation of the asterisked rules above will result in immediate suspension from church property and/or faith formation or other activity if not on church property. Parents will be contacted immediately by DRE/Pastoral Minister and arrangements will be made to send child/youth home immediately. Proper authorities will be contacted as deemed necessary.
- Any violation of non-asterisked policies will first be addressed by catechist/assistant.

Further violation will be reported to Director of Religious Education who will make a determination of appropriate action.

Bullying/Harassment Policy and Procedure

Scope – Parish wide

Definitions

- **Harassment:** Behavior that may annoy, threaten, intimidate, alarm, or puts a person in fear of their safety. Harassment is unwanted, unwelcomed, and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment for the victim.
- **Bullying:** Without limiting any definition of bullying under any state or federal law or regulation, bullying behavior refers to the use of physical force or verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic communication (including but not limited to instant messaging, text messaging, e-mailing, and using websites) to threaten, intimidate, ridicule, humiliate, or harass any person.
- **Sexting:** generating, sending or receiving, encouraging others to send or receive, or showing others, through an electronic device, a text message, photograph, video, or other medium sexually explicit images, messages, or photographs.

Policy

While any are working, volunteering, or participating in anything at any parish sponsored event:

- Must not engage in physical, psychological, written, or verbal harassment of staff, volunteers, or parishioners and must not tolerate such harassment by other Church staff or volunteers.
- Must not use parish computers or any device to gain access to material that is obscene, pornographic, harmful to minors, or otherwise inappropriate for educational use.
- Report immediately any cyberbullying, sexting, or pornography exposure that is observed or reported.

Procedure

- If applicable, device will be secured.
- Parents (if children are involved) will be notified. Resources and support will be provided as needed to parents. Referrals to outside professionals may be available depending on the circumstances.
- If applicable, law enforcement will be contacted.
- Any violations of this policy should be reported to the Pastor of the parish, Diocesan Child Protection Office, and/or the Chancery office.