

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON PARISH

FAITH FORMATION STAFF

PASTOR _____ FATHER DOUGLAS MAYER
DIRECTOR _____ SUSAN BEDNARZ
YOUTH GROUP _____ ANDREW BYERS
SECRETARY _____ MOLLY KOHLER

FAITH FORMATION DEPARTMENT
509 W. DIVISION ROAD
VALPARAISO, INDIANA
46385-9091

PHONE NUMBER: 219-462-2202
FAX NUMBER: 219-465-7673
EMAIL: ffseton@comcast.net
WEBSITE: www.seton.com

OFFICE HOURS:

NOON - 7:45 P.M. MONDAY
10:00 A.M. - 5:45 P.M. TUESDAY
9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY
CLOSED ON FRIDAY

Security Procedure

For security purposes the Faith Formation Program doors are locked. If you find the door locked, please knock and someone will admit you.

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

“Empowered by Word and Sacrament,
The St. Elizabeth Seton Parish Family seeks
To share the love of Christ with all
...through the nourishment of liturgy,
...thoughtful religious formation,
...opportunities of ministry, and
...compassionate outreach to those in need.”

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON PARISH FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Faith Formation Program at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton provides Catholic, Christian education for all members of the parish community. Guided by the Holy Spirit, all are invited to a life-long commitment to faith formation / religious education, a deepening of faith and a strengthening of moral family values.

Adults can take advantage of opportunities to continue their faith formation / religious education and grow together in a greater understanding and fuller appreciation of liturgy and sacraments thus enabling them to celebrate together and be more aware of their role as ministers. These opportunities such as scripture study, family sacramental sessions, and faith filled directed retreats also provide information needed to direct the adult learner toward individual spiritual growth.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

All Faith Formation opportunities for children are intended to complement the religious formation done by the parents by recognizing the knowledge of God’s love for us, showing how that love can be expressed sacramentally, and by modeling service to the community and the church. Supported by a parish community that catechizes by its lifestyle, liturgy, service, and hospitality, children grow spiritually through the formal and informal sharing of God’s Word. The goal is to provide the children who are catechized with a real sense of belonging to the community.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Faith Formation Program does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, sex, age, national origin, or physical, mental disability.

FAITH FORMATION WEB PAGE INFORMATION

All information for the Faith Formation department can be found on the church web site at www.seseton.com. The parent handbook, the Faith Formation calendar, and sacrament preparation dates are all posted on this site.

All class cancelations will be immediately posted on this site for your convenience.

PHILOSOPHY, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PARENTS AS CATECHIST

The Faith Formation Program sessions for children (students) are to complement **not** substitute for the religious formation of our children by parents in their homes.

The Faith Formation Program offers additional sessions for the preparation of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Sacrament of First Eucharist, and the Sacrament of Confirmation throughout the year. These sessions are for both the child (student) and the parent to attend.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Faith Formation Program is available to **registered families** of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish who have children enrolled in a public elementary school grade 1 through high school.

FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN INCLUDE:

Traditional classroom catechesis is offered for grade one through grade six that meet during scheduled sessions on Monday and Tuesday in Seton Hall. Classroom sessions will be selected at registration according to availability.

Junior High Students (Grades 7 & 8) classroom scheduled sessions are offered on Sunday morning and Monday and Tuesday evenings.

Refer to calendar insert page for the starting dates.

SESSIONS FOR GRADES 1-8

SUNDAY: Grades 7-8: 10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

MONDAY I: *Grades 1-6:* 4:30 - 5:45 p.m.

MONDAY II: *Grades 1-8:* 6:30 - 7:45 p.m.

TUESDAY I: *Grades 1-8:* 4:30 - 5:45 p.m.

PARISH CATECHIST STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

In addition to the Faith Formation Program governing behavior of students, the catechist may add rules for the orderly maintenance of a safe learning environment in his/her respective classroom. The catechist or aide in the classroom shall handle discipline. If a situation arises beyond the catechist's handling, the catechist will consult with the Director. The Director will speak to the student and take direct action. If no corrective measure is made after meeting with a Director, parents will be notified.

BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE POLICY

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton has been blessed with a community of caring and responsible young people. However, consistent **behavior problems will NOT be tolerated**. In the event that The Faith Formation Department experiences a consistent and significant problem concerning a lack of respect the following actions will be taken:

The **First time** the student is sent to the Faith Formation Office, the Director of the Faith Formation Program will discuss the situation with the student. *If the problem presented is serious*, a call will be made to the home requesting the parent(s) meet to try to resolve the difficulty.

The **Second time** the student is sent to the Faith Formation Office, the parents of the student will be called.

The **Third time** the student is sent to the Faith Formation Office, the parent(s) and student will be expected to meet with the Catechist and Director of the Faith Formation Program to resolve the situation before the student may attend class again. An example of a resolution may be for the parents to participate in class.

The **Fourth time** the student is sent to the Faith Formation Office, the Pastor will be consulted.

The **Fifth time** the student is sent to the Faith Formation Office, the Office will request that the parents home school their child. With home schooling, the Guidelines for those who home school shall be followed. Each chapter must be completed along with the unit assessments and given to the Faith Formation Office upon completion.

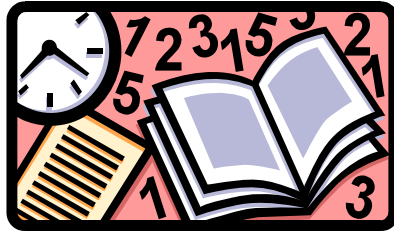
WE ARE NOT PERMANENTLY REMOVING YOUR CHILD FROM THE FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM. WE ARE POSTPONING THE PROCESS UNTIL IT CAN BE DONE EFFECTIVELY!

We expect you to discuss this policy with your child (ren). Our sincere wish is that these actions will never have to be taken. We are confident that with the cooperation of our catechists, staff and most importantly, parents, we will have a pleasant year in the Faith Formation Program.

- Any grievances with the behavior/discipline procedure policy will need to be
- submitted to the Faith Formation Board.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURE / TARDINESS POLICY

All students should enter the building through Seton Hall double doors only. They are to go quietly and orderly to their assigned classroom. Please have the students arrive on time. Once the dividers are pulled, latecomers are very disruptive to the individual class and to the entire program as well.



Arrival

Students may arrive **no earlier than 10 minutes before class begins**. Any students arriving before this time will be asked to wait with their parents until their catechist arrives. No students are to go into their classroom until their catechist is in the room.

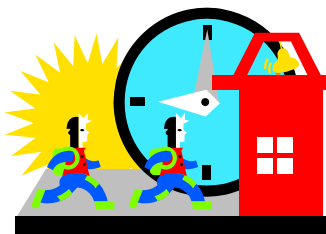
Tardy

Students will be marked tardy if they arrive 10 minutes or more after their session starting time. Five (5) times tardy will equal one (1) absence.

Early Dismissal

If it is necessary for a student to leave the Faith Formation class early he/she must have a note upon entering class from the parents. The note should state the time the child is to leave, the reason for leaving early and the name of the adult who will be picking them up from the Faith Formation program. The parent/adult is then to come into Seton Hall to sign out and pick up their child at the Aides-In-General's table. Five (5) early dismissals will equal one (1) absence.

** For the safety of the children, the double doors entering Seton Hall will be locked 10 minutes after the starting time of class until dismissal. If you need to enter the building after the doors are locked, the Aides-in-General will be there to let you into the building.



TRAFFIC DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

1. **Every car picking up students needs a car number.** On the first night of class the parent should escort their child(ren) into Seton Hall to get the car number from the Aides-in-General. All drivers and students should know this car number.
2. **We ask the parent(s) not to come earlier than 10 minutes before dismissal** of the session to pick up their child(ren). It only makes the wait seem longer. If everyone cooperates with the Aides-in-General the system is quite efficient.
3. **Car numbers are to be placed in the front window on the passenger side.**
4. There is **ONLY ONE-WAY TRAFFIC** through the circle drive at all times.
5. Every car picking up students should pull up past the middle set of double doors, in a **single line**, along the driveway to allow other cars to pull behind, with **NO double parking**. This is for the safety of the students. The Aides-in-General will announce carpool numbers over the intercom. The students will be dismissed in an orderly fashion from their classroom for pick-up.
6. **The Faith Formation Program Staff** asks the parents not to enter the building unless it is a real emergency. The Aides-in-General are directed not to call the car numbers of parents who come into the building until all families waiting in their cars have been called **FIRST**. Parents who come into the building will have their numbers called last. (Refer to Early Dismissal Policy on page 5)



ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES POLICY

Because classes are held only once a week, it is most essential that students be present for each and every class. Each lesson builds upon the previous one and a session missed is an experience lost; it cannot really be made up. Erratic and unexcused absences will be reviewed. The Faith Formation Board reserves the right to review a student's readiness for advancement to the next grade level.

Grades 1 – 8

Attendance for weekly classroom sessions cannot **be less than 75%**.

Grades 1-6 have a total of 28 classroom sessions. Each student must attend, at least, **21 classes** to be eligible for promotion.

Grades 7 & 8 have a total of 20 classroom sessions. Each student must attend, at least, **15 classes** each year to be eligible for the Sacrament of Confirmation. If attendance is lacking, the sacrament can be denied.

Refer to the calendar insert page for class schedule.

Absences will require a signed note from a parent upon the student's return to class. If illness occurs or cases of emergency come up, a parent or another responsible adult is expected to inform the office by calling 219-462-2202.

Students are expected to read through the lesson she/he missed and complete the given assignment. All missed class work must be satisfactorily completed and returned to their catechist. This requirement does not excuse the absence. With excess absences the parents will be contacted by the Faith Formation Board to schedule a meeting to review your child's attendance.

Sacraments

The immediate preparation time that occurs for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation is vital and families must attend without exception. All Tuition Fees: both past due or current must be paid in full for your child to receive any sacrament.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation has two **mandatory** preparation meetings that must be completed by guardian and child before receiving the sacrament.

The Sacrament of Eucharist has two **mandatory** preparation meetings that must be completed by guardian and child before receiving the sacrament along with a rehearsal the day before the actual celebration.

The Sacrament of Confirmation has four **mandatory** preparation meetings that will be explained at an informative meeting in the spring of 8th grade.

SACRAMENTAL POLICY

Parents have a right and duty to be intimately involved in preparing their children for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation. Religious Education preparation aims to help parents grow in understanding and appreciation of the Sacraments and participate readily in preparing their children.

Preparation for the **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION** is to **PRECEDE FIRST EUCHARIST** and must be **kept distinct by clear and unhurried separation**. This is to be done so that the specific identity of each sacrament is apparent and so that, before receiving First Eucharist the child will be familiar with the revised Rite of Reconciliation. Because continuing, lifelong conversion is a part of what it means to grow in faith, catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation is ongoing.

Preparation for the SACRAMENT OF FIRST EUCHARIST is conducted **separately** from preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, since each sacrament deserves its own concentrated preparation. Faith Formation for children must always respect the natural disposition, ability, age, and circumstances of individuals.

The length of the program of preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist will be **no less** than **ONE-YEAR PRIOR ATTENDANCE** and participation in a Faith Formation Program and the immediate preparation time that occurs for the sacrament.

The **Sacrament of Confirmation** is usually celebrated in the fall of the year at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church. The length of the preparation program will be **no less** than **TWO-YEARS PRIOR ATTENDANCE** and immediate preparation time that occurs for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Absences cannot be tolerated due to the importance of the immediate preparation time needed.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM PROCEDURE POLICY

Parents have the right and the duty to be intimately involved in preparing their children for the sacrament of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation; therefore, family preparation is the model used. Catechesis is provided for parents at scheduled meetings throughout the year. The celebration of Reconciliation is traditionally scheduled during Lent. The celebration of First Eucharist is traditionally scheduled in the spring. The celebration of Confirmation is traditionally scheduled in the fall.

Additional scheduled sessions for the preparation of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation are held throughout the year. The sessions are for both the child (student) and parent (sponsor) to attend.

Refer to the calendar insert page for the scheduled preparation sessions.

FEE POLICIES

There is a FAMILY TUITION FEE of \$75.00 PER YEAR. Fees may be paid by the month, by the semester, or by the year. The fee covers the cost of textbooks, supplies, and any additional materials needed for the use of the children. **An additional fee of \$25** for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, for the Sacrament of Eucharist, or the Sacrament of Confirmation per child will be assessed to cover the additional supplies and textbooks.

A \$50 fee per student for the Sacrament of Confirmation preparation if a Confirmation Candidate is the **ONLY** member of your family in the Faith Formation Program.

All program fees must be paid in full for your child to receive any sacrament.

All registrations received after the scheduled August date will be assessed a **\$10 late fee**. This does not apply for parishioners new to the parish.

There will be a **\$5.00 “Switch” fee** applied to your family fee for any classroom session switch made after the final day of scheduled registration in August.

All previous unpaid Program Tuition Fees must be paid in full and current to register your children in the Faith Formation Program.

There are scholarships available for hardship situations. Please contact the Faith Formation Office if you are in need of assistance. If you receive a scholarship because of a hardship situation, we ask that you assist in the Faith Formation Program during the time your child attends or during the day when you are available. All scholarships are confidential. We will never refuse a child from attending Faith Formation classes due to financial difficulties. We want all our children to have a continuing experience of church and Jesus.



Textbooks

The Diocese of Gary approves all textbooks used. Students are expected to bring their books to class each day. If a book is lost or stolen replacement books will be available at the cost of **\$17.00 per book**.

WEATHER CLOSING POLICY

If public school or school programs are canceled due to weather conditions, the Faith Formation Program sessions and programs are *automatically canceled*. Keep in mind that we are in Lake and Porter Counties with seven school systems attending the Faith Formation Program. As you know a wonderful addition to our communication efforts is ONE CALL NOW message system. All calls presently go to your home phone number and if you would like to add other numbers, such as cell phones, please call the parish office. For those who have not given us their phone number, you are not included in the call list and must listen to the local radio station for cancellations. Please check the website www.seseton.com for immediate information when classes are canceled.

Evacuation Drills

Drills are conducted in the fall for each Faith Formation Program session. Evacuation routes and procedures are posted in a conspicuous place in each classroom. These procedures are reviewed periodically.



Fire

Fire drills are conducted in the fall. Catechists are instructed about what to do in case of fire, and how and where to guide students to safe areas outside the building. Fire extinguishers are located in Seton Hall and the kitchen.



Bomb

Bomb threat drills are conducted the same as a fire drill. Catechists are instructed where to guide students to safe areas outside the building.



Earthquake

In the event of an earthquake warning, students are instructed to get under desks or tables for protection.



Tornado

Tornado drills are conducted in the fall. Catechists guide students to a designated safe hallway area within the building.

CUSTODY POLICY

The Faith Formation Program Staff presumes that in the case of a divorce or separation that both parents have access to the child (ren), unless one parent can provide a court order stating otherwise.

ABUSE PROCEDURE

All Faith Formation Program Staff are required to read and become familiar with the Sexual Abuse Policy of the Diocese of Gary. It is a Federal, State, and Local law that educational facilities report to the proper authorities any case of possible child abuse whether it is physical, mental or emotional. In compliance with this law and the rights of the student, the staff at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Faith Formation will carry out this procedure

SEARCH AND SEIZURE PROCEDURE

The Faith Formation staff has the right to search a student's person and/or property if reasonable cause exists in the presence of another adult.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Faith Formation Program staff will not dispense any medication to any student. If a student requires medication during class the parent must come to class and dispense the medication.



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

Students with head lice, pink eye (conjunctivitis), or other communicable diseases must be excluded from class until symptoms are no longer apparent. Please inform the office of any known conditions.

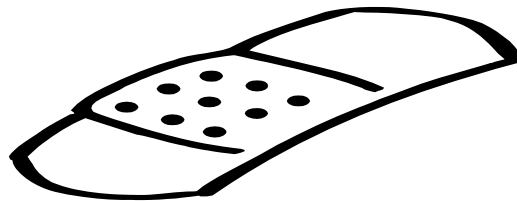
ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS PROCEDURE

Should a student become ill or injured during class time a parent will be notified. If it is impossible to reach the parent, guardian, or the person listed on the emergency form, the family doctor or emergency unit as stated on the emergency form will be called. It is essential that the Faith Formation Program office have current emergency numbers to use if the parent or guardian cannot be reached.

Supplies for handling accidents that involve blood and bodily fluids are available in the Catechist and Aide bin. Universal health and safety precautions should be used to ensure increased safety when handling blood or bodily fluids. The Office for Religious Education, Archdiocese of Chicago lists eight standard procedures of safety involving blood or bodily fluids. Please read these universal health and safety precautions before you assist a person in need of first aid. After you have cared for a person who needs first aid assistance, please fill out the checklist for health care providers' form. Please return the checklist for health care providers' form to the Faith Formation Program Office.

The following are standard Universal Health and Safety precautions for handling accidents which involve blood and bodily fluids:

- a. Bodily fluids should not be touched; so disposable rubber gloves are available in all catechist and aide bins. All catechetical staff in cleaning up blood and body fluid spills should wear these gloves.
- a. To prevent the spread of disease, all catechetical staff should routinely wash their hands using soap and running water. Disposable paper towels are available.
- a. Open lesions on participants and staff should be covered if possible.
- a. Soiled surfaces should be promptly cleaned with a solution containing bleach, and rubber gloves should be worn during that process. Disposable materials such as paper towels should be used.
- a. All disposable materials, including gloves, should be disposed of in a sealed plastic bag.
- a. The use of common water bottles, cups, and towels should be eliminated.
- a. When possible, self-treatment of injuries and illness should be encouraged.
- a. First Aid materials are available in the Faith Formation Program Office.



THE ORDER OF ADULT INITIATION

We have an ongoing Rite of Christian Initiation for adults (adapted for children) process at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

For more information please call the Faith Formation Office at 219-462-2202.

SCRIPTURE STUDY AND ADULT EDUCATION

An invitation is extended to all parishioners and friends to participate in the Bible Scripture Study and/or The Diocesan Growth in Faith Program.

Anyone interest please call the Parish Office at 219-464-1624 or the Faith Formation Office at 219-462-2202.

YOUTH GROUP

The High School Youth Group comes together to build Christian Community among themselves and especially with the rest of the parish community. These sessions are a balanced blend of spiritual, topical and social events.

The Youth Group meets on Sunday, from 6:30 p.m. until 8 p.m. The newsletter and bulletin provide information concerning topics and events. The calendar for the Youth Group meetings can be found in the insert page.



