

# **Guardian Angel Parish Faith Formation Handbook 2023-2024**

**St Andrew Faith Formation Office  
128 Norwich Avenue  
Colchester, CT 06415**

**Director of Faith Formation:** Ronald J Krystofik Jr.

**Email:**

faithformation@guardiansangelsocolchester.org

**Website:**

<https://www.guardianangelsparishofcolchester.org>

**Office Number:** 860-537-5415

**Ron Cell :** 860-608-2919

**Office Hours:** **Most:** Monday – Thursday 9 -11 pm  
and during class times or by  
appointment

**Mission:**

St Andrew Faith Formation strives to support a fun and interactive faith journey by teaching children to live their faith as Jesus taught through community, guidance, firm morals, positive examples and love.

## Registration

Faith Formation programs are available to all children in grades 1 – 9 for families who are registered and active parishioners at St Andrew Church. Families can register to become parishioners by contacting the Parish Office.

Registration for Faith Formation is held during a limited window of dates that are announced at Mass, on the church's web site and in the church bulletin. Children of Catechists and assistant Catechists receive priority class placement and other students are registered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**REGISTRATION FEE: \$55.00 for the first child, \$45.00 for each additional child with a family max of \$160.00 (Retreat, Special Events, and Apparel are not included in Family Max)**

**Late fee of \$10.00/ student after September 1, 202**

**Additional costs: 2<sup>nd</sup> grade \$20.00 for First Communion Preparation  
8<sup>th</sup> grade \$65.00 for Confirmation Retreat  
9<sup>th</sup> grade \$85.00 for Retreat and Confirmation gown or Stole**

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A late fee is charged after the announced registration period has passed. In the event that classes are filled, home schooling may be the only option with the exception of sacramental years 2 – First Communion and 8 & 9 two year Mandatory Confirmation class.

Registration fees are used for purchasing student textbooks, classroom materials, hall maintenance, and retreats as well as fixed and indirect costs associated with running our Faith Formation program throughout the year.

Fees may be waived due to financial hardships, with the approval of the DRE or the Pastor. Requests and approvals are handled in the strictest confidence. If you have any financial concerns please contact the Director of Religious Education.

In order to be registered, students in grades 2-9 are expected to have attended Faith Formation in the previous year and be prepared for placement in their next grade. Students who have not enrolled in a Faith Formation program are expected to make special arrangements with the DRE regarding matriculation into Guardian Angels Formation program.

Any child registering for the first time in Guardian Angels Faith Formation program **MUST** present a Baptismal Certificate, unless the child was baptized at St Andrew or St. Francis as well as any other sacrament certificates applicable to the age of the child. **PLEASE NO ORIGINALS, COPIES ONLY.** If you are unable to make a copy we can make copies in the office.

Home schooling by the student's parents is an alternative to our traditional classroom instruction for children from grades 1-7 (not including grade 2) and requires the following:

1. Parents must register students for the home school program.
2. Parents must follow the grade level appropriate curriculum, which will be available along with the grade level books or program.
3. Parents must attend Faith Formation Meetings when applicable.
4. Student must attend Faith Formation Meetings/retreats when applicable.
5. Student must complete and return all unit assessments.

**Note: Students attending sacramental preparation classes (grades 2, 8 and 9) may not be home schooled. These students must attend formal classes to prepare for receiving their sacraments.**

The Faith Formation Program runs from September – May and meets weekly for Grades 1-5 and every other week for Grades 6-9. The schedule for your child's grade will be e-mailed and posted on the website. In addition to the child's involvement in a Faith Formation or Confirmation program, it is important that Faith Formation is supplemented by a strong spiritual family life that is marked by weekly Mass Attendance, faith sharing, prayer, sacrifice, and participation in the sacramental life of the Church.

**We encourage you to work with your children on their Faith Formation lessons and prayers.** Let's all work together to help our youth learn more about our wonderful Catholic Faith.

# SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

St Andrew Church Safe Environment Program's is to provide members, young and old, strong and vulnerable, with information to ensure all people are aware and empowered to create and maintain a "safe environment" for all individuals to practice their faith.

In compliance with the Pastoral Code of Conduct set forth by the Diocese of Norwich and the United Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Norwich diocese and this parish provide training and background checks of all employees, Catechists, assistants, child advocates and any volunteers who are working with children. All Faith Formation Catechists and assistants are required to participate in a one-time training session and consent to periodic background checks.

Please be assured that every volunteer working with our children is expected to follow these mandates. In the event that a concern regarding an individual's conduct arises associated with the parish, please contact the Pastor or the Director of Faith Formation **immediately**.

As part of your child's religious education, the teacher or designee will discuss age appropriate topics that children commonly encounter such as bullying, teasing, peer pressure, inappropriate comments by peers and/or adults, disrespectful behavior, uncomfortable situations at home, school and/or the community; and reinforce appropriate conduct and discuss who to go to for help, when necessary. Please contact the Director of Faith Formation with any questions or concerns.

As part of the Safe Environment Program in our parish, for grades 1-5 **authorized individuals only**, must sign students in and out class. Please do not let your child sign themselves in or out. Students will not be released to anyone except a parent or authorized individual (indicated on the registration form) and **all students** must be signed out of class. Should there be an emergency situation the Director of Faith Formation is to be contacted.

## **Grades 6-9**

We believe that grades 6-9 should be treated like young adults, for that reason they will be responsible for signing themselves in for class. That being said if they should forget to sign themselves in they will not receive credit for the class. They should not sign in any other student, especially if that student is absent. We will be doing head counts to verify who has come in and that it corresponds to the sign-in sheet. In addition, grades 6-9 will not have to sign-out; they will be released via the kitchen door to the parking lot. We ask that you be on time.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Our Pastor and Director of Faith Formation expect that each week every student and their family attend weekly Mass as it is a primary tenet of our faith. There are two crucial elements to a comprehensive faith formation program for children and teens: Mass and class attendance and both are accompanied by ongoing parental support and guidance.

Mass times are Saturdays 4:00, Sundays 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 & Teen Mass at 5:00.

### **MASS ATTENDANCE:**

We strongly encourage all children and teens attend weekly Mass, it is important that Faith Formation is supplemented by a strong spiritual family life that is marked by weekly Mass & Holy Days of Obligation.

**Weekly Mass and Holy Days of Obligation attendance is MANDATORY for grades 8-9. A sign in book will be available at the main entrance of St Andrew church.**

Mass times are Saturdays 4:00, Sundays 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 & Teen Mass at 5:00.

If you are away for any reason and unable to attend Mass at St Andrew with your 8th & 9th grader and attend Mass at another church just bring a copy of the bulletin from the church you attended Mass.

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE:**

Students are expected to be on time for class. Late arrivals cause disruptions and show a lack of respect for the teacher as well as fellow students.

**Grade 1-5 Attendance** is recorded on the class sign-in and sign-out sheet. Parents it is your responsibility to sign your child in & out. Please **do not** let your child sign themselves in or out.

**Grade 6-9 Attendance** is also recorded on a sign-in sheet only and is the responsibility of your child to sign themselves in. That being said if they should forget to sign themselves in they will not receive credit for the class. Students should not sign in any other student, especially if that student is absent. We will be doing head counts to verify who has come in and that it corresponds to the sign-in sheet. In addition, grades 6-9 will not have to sign-out; they will be released via the kitchen door to the parking lot. We ask that you be on time.

## **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

Grade 1-5 **Sunday Morning 9:30** September 17, 2023- May 5, 2024  
**5 absences** allowed per year for sickness/emergency

Grade 6 and 7 **Tuesday 6:30-8:00 pm** September 19 ,2023-April 16, 24  
**4 absences** allowed per year for sickness/emergency

Grade 8 **Confirmation 1, Thursday 6:30-8:00 pm,**  
**September 23, 2023-April 18, 2024**  
Students are expected to attend each/every class scheduled class  
Per the Confirmation program guidelines.  
**4 absences** allowed per year for sickness/emergency

Grade 9 **Confirmation 2, Thursday 6:30-8:00 pm,**  
**September 23, 2023-April 18, 2024**  
Students are expected to attend each/every class scheduled class  
Per the Confirmation program guidelines.  
**4 absences** allowed per year for sickness/emergency

**Students will not be promoted to the next grade until all outstanding make-up work is completed and submitted to our office.**

## **LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY DISMISSAL POLICY:**

- 1. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late will be considered absent.**
- 2. Students may not be dismissed more than 15 minutes early except for illness or family emergency. Students are expected to remain for the entire class and should not make a habit of leaving early for sports or other events.**

If your student is absent from class, **parents must notify the office**. Do not relay this information to volunteers or other parents – **parents** must notify us directly. If your student is going to be late or leave early we must be notified via e-mail or phone call by the parent.

## STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS

### ALL GRADES

1. Students are expected to be on time for class. Late arrivals cause disruptions and show a lack of respect for the teacher as well as fellow students.
2. If a student is absent for any reason the **ENTIRE** chapter and/or Unit Review must be completed prior to the next class.
3. All phones and devices must be turned off and should not be taken out during class or break. If an item **ex: Phone is used during class or break, it will be taken away and not returned until the end of class. This also includes but not limited to FIDGET TOYS.**
4. Show respect to Priests, Sisters and Catechists. When clergy enters your classroom, you will stand and greet them in a respectful way.
5. Respect for your Catechists and classmate is expected. Teasing and foul language will not be tolerated. Proper classroom rules are applied, raising your hand your hand to ask or answer a question and using inside voices to respect the classrooms next door.
6. No Food, gum or drink will be permitted during class in the Parish Hall or in St Andrew Church.
7. Hats, hoods & sunglasses must be removed upon entering the Hall or Church,
8. Always bring your books with you when you come to class and take it home with you after class. These are your books to keep. Please write in them during class or if making up work and please treat the books with respect.
9. Students are expected not to push or break the furniture. If a student damages any item, the student and their parents are liable. There will be no writing on the walls, tabletops or blackboards nor sitting on table before, during or after class.
10. For your protection and safety, students are to use the walkway when coming to or leaving class. Do not run, and use caution when walking in the parking lot.
11. Please keep restrooms tidy. Do not forget to flush the toilet after using, wash your hands and DO NOT throw paper towels into the sink or toilet. Because our class time is limited, you are encouraged to limit your bathroom use to before and after class, not during class.

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## **2023–2024 Sunday CLASS SCHEDULES GRADES 1-5**

**Classes are held on Sundays at 9:30 – 10:30am**

**The 2023-2024 Faith Formation year will begin starting on **September 17, 2023** with a mandatory **Parent only meeting for grades 1-5 including Homeschool**. If you cannot make Sunday 9/17 9:30 am we have arranged a weeknight meeting on 9/13 at 6:00pm and one at 7:15 children Do Not need to attend.**

**Faith Formation Classes will be held on the following days:**

### **2023**

**September 13 & 17 Parent Meetings, 24  
October 1, 15, 22, 29  
November 5, 19  
December 3, 10, 17**

### **2024**

**January 7, 21, 28  
February 4, 11, 25  
March 3, 10, 17  
April 21, 28  
May 5 (Last Class)**

Please be sure your child arrives on time for class and be certain to pick your child up as soon as class is over. If there are any problems or concerns please contact the Faith Formation Office.

#### **Reminder:**

**Second grade**, First Holy Communion students must attend a minimum of 18 classes, this is a Sacrament year. First Communion students must pass a Prayer Review given in February.

If a student is absent for any reason the **ENTIRE Chapter, all work and Chapter(s) and or Unit Review** must be completed. If you miss a class you must make up the work. **The chapter(s) for the week you missed is the Homework and should be done promptly and turned into the teacher at the next class.**

**\*In times of inclement weather where classes are cancelled you will be notified by email, Check website: [guardianangelsparishofcolchester.org/religious-education](http://guardianangelsparishofcolchester.org/religious-education) or watch WFSB Channel 3 News networks for cancellations**



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**2023-2024**

## **6<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> GRADE SCHEDULE**

Classes are TUESDAY EVENINGS 6:30-8:00 pm

Faith Formation classes for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade will begin:

**\*\*\*Tuesday, September 19, 2023 this is a Mandatory Parent Student Meeting**

*Please mark these dates on your calendar for future reference.*

**6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Graders, are required to do 5 Community Service Hours and Complete a Saint Paper**

Faith Formation Classes for 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade will be held on the following days:

### 2023

September 19\*\*\*

October 3, 17

November 7, 28

December 12

### 2024

January 2, 16, 30

February 13, 27

March 5, 19

April 2, 16

Saint Paper due December 17, 2023

Community Service Hours due March 17, 2024

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**2023-2024**

## **CONFIRMATION 1 SCHEDULE**

**8<sup>th</sup> GRADE**

Classes are THURSDAY EVENINGS 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Faith Formation classes for 8<sup>th</sup> grade will begin on:

**\*\*\*\*Thursday, September 21, 2023** with a Mandatory parent/student meeting.

*Please mark these dates on your calendar for future reference.*

**Confirmation 1 Students are required to attend Weekly Mass and sign-in.**

**8<sup>th</sup> Graders, Confirmation 1, are required to do 10 Community Service Hours, Complete a Saint Paper and attend a Confirmation Retreat & Retreat Mass**

**Class Attendance is Mandatory and student must attend the Confirmation retreat & Retreat Mass**

Faith Formation Classes for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade will be held on the following days:

### 2023

September 21\*\*\*\* (Mandatory Parent/Student meeting)

October 5, 19

November 9, 30

December 14

### 2024

January 4, 18

February 1, 15, 29

March 7, 21, 28 (Holy Thursday Attend Mass)

April 4, 18 Last Class

Retreat Information:

**TBD Spring Retreat with Spring Retreat Mass on TBD**

Saint Paper due December 17, 2023

Community Service Hours due March 17, 2024

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**2023-2024**

## **CONFIRMATION 1 SCHEDULE**

**9<sup>th</sup> GRADE**

Classes are THURSDAY EVENINGS 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Faith Formation classes for 9<sup>th</sup> grade will begin on:

**\*\*\*\*Thursday, September 21, 2023** with a Mandatory parent/student meeting.

*Please mark these dates on your calendar for future reference.*

**Confirmation 1 Students are required to attend Weekly Mass and sign-in.**

**9<sup>th</sup> Graders, Confirmation 1, are required to do 20 Community Service Hours, Complete a Saint Paper and attend a Confirmation Retreat & Retreat Mass**

**Class Attendance is Mandatory and student must attend the Confirmation retreat & Retreat Mass**

Faith Formation Classes for 9<sup>th</sup> Grade will be held on the following days:

### 2023

September 21\*\*\*\* (Mandatory Parent/Student meeting)

October 5, 19

November 9, 30

December 14

### 2024

January 4, 18

February 1, 15, 29

March 7, 21, 28 (**Holy Thursday Attend Mass**)

April 4, 18 Last Class

**Retreat Information:**

**TBD Spring Retreat with Spring Retreat Mass on TBD**

**Saint Paper due December 17, 2023**

**Community Service Hours due March 17, 2024**

In times of inclement weather where classes are cancelled you will be notified by email, website: [guardianangelsofcolchester.org/religious-education](http://guardianangelsofcolchester.org/religious-education) or watch WFSB Channel 3 News networks for cancellations.