



Boone County Catholic Community

Faith Formation Handbook

K to 12 Program

Revised 2018

General Information

Boone County Catholic Community

915 12th ST

Boone, IA 50036

Office 515-432-1971

Office Hours: M-F 8:30-4:00PM

Closed for lunch from 12:00-1:00PM

Pastor.....Father Brian Hughes*pastor@shboone.com*

Parish Secretary.....*secretary@shboone.com*

Director of Religious Education

Kathy Steffen _____*dre@shboone.com*

Baptismal PrepDeacon David Brown

RCIA Coordinator..... Father Brian Hughes

Class Schedule

Grades K to 5th-on Wednesdays from 5:15 - 6:15 pm

Grades 6 to high school Wednesdays from 6:45—8:00 pm

Registration Fees

See the parish website for current fees.

Parish Registration

Please note that filling out registration forms for your child to be a part of our religious education program does not register your family in our parish. A child prepares and receives sacraments in their church parish so it is very important that you fill out a registration form for Sacred Heart Parish. If you are in need of a Sacred Heart Parish registration form, please contact our parish office. If you are not sure if you are registered with our parish, contact our or parish secretary and they will be happy to check for you.

Communication Methods

You may receive periodic information from your child's catechist regarding upcoming events, special prayer services, etc. Otherwise we will try to make all other contacts with you via email and Sunday bulletin. For those who do not have internet, please check the bulletin, notes home from class, and the mail.

Mission Statement

We believe that our mission, guided by the Holy Spirit, is to proclaim, teach, and live God's Word. Through enriching our educational program and activities, we will lead our children to develop a relationship with Jesus, a life of prayer, and a life of service to others.

Goals for our religious education program

1. To provide support for the primary catechists, the parents.
2. To provide the students with opportunities to acquire knowledge of Scripture and the living traditions and teachings of the Catholic Church.
3. To provide experiences that will allow the students to develop personal relational skills and a sense of self-identity.
4. To provide experiences and information that will encourage students to develop an awareness of his/her place in the larger community.
5. To encourage respect for the diversity of religious traditions throughout the world.

Role of Parents

It is a fact that a person does not **'get religion'** simply by attending a one hour class once a week for 8 months a year. Faith Formation is a life process that takes place in the home, at weekly Mass, and in class.

Parents **"SHARE"** in students' development as true Christians and strong Catholics. The Church reminds us that you, the parents, are the primary catechists of your children, both by word and example. It is important that you model the behavior and example you want your child/children to manifest. They need to know that prayer, rituals, and the liturgy are an important part of your life.

As stated in The Catechism of the Catholic Church, No.2226: "Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family Catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart for the catechesis of children and parents."

We ask you as parents to (SHARE):

Stress the importance to your child of learning about his or her faith. Ask them about class and support the lesson through your interest.

Help your child actively practice his or her faith by attendance at Sunday Mass, class, and daily prayer.

Accept primary responsibility for the religious education of your children. Religious Education classes exist for the purpose of assisting you, in your Catholic Christian responsibility to your children.

Re-inforce and support the Catechist who are serving this community with their time and gifts. They are sharing their faith and have a right to expect your support and the respect of your child and proper conduct in the classroom.

Encourage good attendance at Religious Education classes and the memorization of prayers.

Parent Involvement

We maintain an "open door" policy. If you would like to attend one of your child's gatherings/class, we ask that you notify the teacher/catechist and the DRE or Youth Minister prior to arriving. You are always welcome!

Attendance

We strive for maximum attendance each week, as well as from year to year. Faith is an ongoing process and children/youth need the consistency of attending class and Mass on a regular basis throughout the year. If your child is going to be absent from class, please call the office at 515-432-1971, or email the DRE so we don't call you to say your child is not here. Leave a message with your child's name, grade, and reason for the absence or lateness. It is the responsibility of the child/parents to gather information on what assignments need to be completed.

Absences will be recorded on the attendance sheet. When there is an excessive number of absences that have been reached, or are anticipated, the DRE will work with parents and the student on options for completing the course of study. For the sacramental years, students are only allowed 3 unexcused absences. All class materials will need to be completed before receiving the sacrament.

Mass Attendance

The Mass is core to our Catholic faith. It not only celebrates the Eucharistic feast, but also helps to build community in our parish through worship. It is expected that parents and children will participate in the weekend celebration of the Mass as well as Mass for the Holy Days of Obligation.

Arrival/Departure of Students

Please be conscious that being on time is an act of charity for all. Having your child here on time allows the least disruption of the class time. It is also important that you pick up your child on time and for us to end on time to respect your time and to respect the time given by the Volunteers.

On Wednesdays, class time is 5:15—6:15pm for K to 5th grade. At 6:45 –8 pm, 6th –high school will meet. Class will begin in the Church for all grades. Then the students will be dismissed to go to their classrooms. The doors of the school will be locked after transition so all persons, after that time, will need to enter through the northeast door that will be monitored by a parent.

NO child will be dismissed early from class without prior approval of the Catechist or DRE.

Discipline Policy

Our Religious Education Program is designed to assist parents with the faith formation of their children, as well as foster values and behavior that are in accord with Catholic Church teaching. This program cannot allow behaviors that are contrary to Catholic faith and morals, including, but not limited to, obstinacy, improper language, bullying, fighting, physical, emotional or psychological intimidation, vandalism, demeaning behavior such as name-calling, obscene language or gestures, and harassment. This list is not exhaustive. Such behaviors violate the central teaching of our faith and will not be tolerated in any form. A safe, secure and respectful educational environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards and build appropriate relationships with others. Conduct by children or parents/guardian or anyone acting on their behalf that is incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the Parish will be grounds for disciplinary action. This includes, but is not limited to, immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where deemed necessary.

Discipline Procedure

Minor discipline problems will be handled directly by the catechist in the classroom. In the event that further disciplining is necessary, after ONE verbal warning, a “3 strikes you are out” policy will prevail.

The **first** time a disruptive behavior occurs, the student is dismissed from class and reports to the DRE. A “Discipline Form/Student Agreement Sheet” is filled out and signed by the student, parent, DRE, and Catechist and kept on file.

The **second** time, the student will report to the DRE and the parent will be called to come pick up their child. Another “Discipline Form” will be filled out, signed and will be kept on file.

The **third** time, the parent will be contacted to come pick up their child and another “Discipline Form” will be completed. The parent and child will need to meet with Fr. Hughes and a parent will also be required to accompany their student to his/her class to assist with instruction and behavior the following week. The student will not be permitted back into the classroom until the parent is able to attend.

Bullying

Bullying involves actions or words against another for the purpose of inflicting physical or emotional harm or discomfort or damage to a person’s reputation that is intimidating or threatening and affects the learning and class environments. The following describes types of bullying but is not an exhaustive list.

- ◇ Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair pulling, or throwing something
- ◇ Getting another person to hit or harm a student
- ◇ Teasing, name-calling making critical remarks or threatening in person or by other means, including text messages.

Bullying (continued)

- ◇ Demeaning and making another the victim of jokes
- ◇ Making rude and /or threatening gestures
- ◇ Excluding or rejecting the student
- ◇ Intimidating (bullying), extorting or exploiting
- ◇ Spreading harmful rumors or gossip

If the bully is threatening harm, a student should tell a Catechist, adult volunteer, and the DRE immediately.

Harassment

Harassment on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, harry, distress, agitate, disturb, or trouble persons when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's volunteer status or employment or advancement or of a student's participation in parish programs or activities;

2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an employee or student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the volunteer, employee, or student;

3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee, volunteer, or student's performance of creating an intimidating or hostile working or learning environment;

4. Harassment as set forth may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- *Verbal, physical, or written harassment or abuse
- *Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature
- *Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.
- *Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at a student, volunteer, or employee.

Sacramental Policy

Diocesan policy calls for the involvement of parents in preparing their children for the sacraments. We believe young children build their values and attitudes largely through a process of identification with those adults in their lives who mean something to them. For this reason, parents are the best teachers of their children at this time. They fulfill a role that no other person or religious education program can really perform. Preparing their child for the celebration of a sacrament is the right and mission of the parent. To assist the parents in their mission of preparing their child, there will be a meeting to explain the program and what is expected of them. The child will attend religious education plus extra sessions set aside just for the sacrament they are preparing for.

Sacrament of First Reconciliation & First Communion

A child preparing for these sacraments will need to attend the Religious Education Classes as well as weekly Mass, both are necessary to receive both sacraments. Students will be having Sacramental Lessons during class time as well as “Centers” with their parents that enriches the learning of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. A *baptismal certificate* must be provided for students who are not baptized at Sacred Heart Church.

Students enrolled in Religious Education will be prepared to receive this sacrament during the second semester of second grade. Students who have not previously been enrolled in religious education classes or home schooled, will be placed in the first year preparation. After receiving the sacraments, students will be placed in class levels with peers. Please see the DRE if your family has special circumstances. If a student missed more than 3 classes, reception of the sacrament may be delayed.

Sacrament of Confirmation:

Confirmation should be a time in each Christian’s life when they have the desire, the knowledge, and the faith to make a personal decision to seek this sacrament and take responsibility for continuing their spiritual formation. Any student wishing to participate in our Confirmation program will be enrolled in our Religious Education program during the 2 year preparation. The two years at Sacred Heart are the freshman and sophomore years in high school. Students are expected to attend all classes and retreats during each year of preparation. If a student has 3 unexcused absences in a given year, this may delay the reception of the sacrament until the instruction has been received and completed. Parents and sponsors of the Confirmand will also be involved in the preparation of the student for Confirmation. A *baptismal certificate* must be provided to the DRE for all students who have not been baptized at Sacred Heart Church or who did not receive their First Eucharist at Sacred Heart Church.

Health and Safety

First Aid

Whenever a student is injured, or complains of feeling ill, catechists will send the student to the DRE and the parents will be notified. In the event of an injury, an "Incident Report" will be filled out and sent home for the parent/guardian to sign and send back to the DRE to keep on file.

Food and Drink

Food, drink, candy, or chewing gum is **NOT** allowed in the church. Nor in classroom unless it is part of the curriculum and under the authority of the catechist and DRE. Food Allergies will be considered at all times.

Food Allergies

Please report on your registration form and notify the RE Office if your child has any food allergies which we should be aware of. (Catechists may hold a party/celebration as part of class, which may include food and drink.)

Contraband

Gum, food and beverages, though considered contraband, do not carry the same weight as others mentioned below and should be consumed before entering the building. If necessary, the office will dispose of these items and parents will be reminded of our policy (see **Food and Drink** for more information).

Student items considered contraband include, but not limited to toys, electronic games, beepers, MP3 players and I Pads, laptop, iPods, and cellphones (during class). These items may be confiscated and returned to students' parents/guardians after discussion with the catechist and DRE. A student's laptop may be in the classroom, if necessary, but not out being used. Catechist/Adults in the classroom may use these or have these devices as part of a lesson.

It is unlawful for minors to be in the possession of weapons (which include but not limited to guns, matches, cigarette lighters, knives, or other sharp objects), drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products. Participants found to be in the possession of such products may be suspended from the program. Depending on the contraband confiscated, the proper legal authorities will be notified.

In the event that a student is suspected of having weapons or drugs in his/her possession, the DRE will be notified. Parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to assist with any search deemed necessary. Parental refusal to cooperate may result in the participant's dismissal from the program.

Cell Phone Policy

It is recommended that cell phones stay at home or in students' cars during religious education class time. In the case that your child needs theirs on their person, please make prior arrangements with the DRE and Catechist. Otherwise, all phones will be collected at the start of each class. Please remember that the church has phones available if they need to use one during class time or events and the Catechists and DRE will also have a cell phone for emergency use.

Medications

Catechists are not to administer any type of medication. Tylenol and Ibuprofen will only be administered with parent knowledge and prior approval.

Fire Procedures

All classes will leave the building through the nearest exit. Catechists are responsible for knowing the location of the nearest exit and for keeping track of their assigned students. The students will move to the church.

Tornado Procedures

All students will move in the lower level classroom (lunchroom) area until an "all clear" has been issued.

Protocol 2002/Safety Plan

The purpose of our Religious Education Safety Plan is to provide an environment in which our students are in a safe and caring facility so that they will have the opportunity to grow and learn, and integrate Gospel values in their lives. "Protocol 2002" happens when there is an event that occurs in the religious education program which results in the need for students to stay in classrooms with teachers. The event may range from an **intruder** in the building, **a medical emergency, a fire, or a gas leak.**

Emergency Procedures:

1. DRE and the Assistant will have parent contact information.
2. Call 911
3. Lock doors and post person at each door to allow for exit and entry of Personnel.
4. If evacuation is necessary, children in the classroom area will be evacuated through the closest and safest exit and assemble in the church.

Bad Weather/Snow Emergency/Cancellation

Potential “bad weather” is always hard to call. Religious Education Classes are cancelled when the public schools cancel or dismiss early due to inclement weather conditions on Wednesdays. If the weather deteriorates in the afternoon on Wednesday or a threat of bad weather such as extreme wind chill, a decision will be made by **4:30PM for all the classes on Wednesday**. If it is necessary to cancel classes; announcements will be made on the parish website, **KWBG 1590 AM** radio and **KCCI TV**. We will also send out an **e-mail** about weather related announcements.

Field Trips

Parents will be notified and asked to sign a form granting permission for field trips. These forms are to assure the safety of your child/children. Parents have the right to ask that their child not participate. Any youth not participating in the field trip is asked to remain home during the event. Students whose behavior does not meet required standards can be denied participation in field trips. Parents may be asked to drive or supervise. **Virtus Awareness** training and a Liability waiver signed is necessary to chaperone/drive for our youth. Also, all drivers transporting students must be pre-approved by the Sioux City Diocese.

Safe Environment Program

In response to the Charter for the Protection of Children as adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Dallas in June 2002, the Diocese of Sioux City has created a safe environment program that includes:

- “The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People: A Policy of the Diocese of Sioux City”
- “The Code of Ethical Standards for All Those Ministering On Behalf of the Church”
- Comprehensive background checks on
 - All existing & new employees of the Diocese and entities associated with the Diocese
 - All existing & new volunteers who have regular contact with children
- “Protecting God’s Children”: An educational awareness program

All employees of the diocese, parishes and/or schools as well as volunteers who have regular contact with children are required to participate in and comply with all aspects of the Safe Environment Program. All records of compliance for the Safe Environment Program are kept at the Central Catholic Offices in Sioux City, Iowa.

“The Charter for the Protection of Children & Young People”

This policy is designed to reach out to victims of sexual abuse with compassion and sensitivity and to assure the safety of minors in the church community. Equally important, this policy provides a framework for reporting and responding to allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by a member of the clergy, an employee or a volunteer of the Diocese.

“Code of Ethical Standards for All Those Ministering”

This Code of Conduct establishes a set of ethical standards for church leaders, including all who minister on behalf of the Church as employees or as volunteers. Violation of the Code will result in disciplinary action by the appropriate authority up to and including termination of employment or removal from ministry.

Employee / Volunteer Background Checks

Offers of employment and continued employment shall be contingent upon obtaining a signed authorization for the procurement of an investigative consumer report (including a criminal background check) for employment purposes and a satisfactory report. Current employees will be required to authorize and undergo annual investigations. Volunteers with access to our children, more than once a month, must pass the background check prior to being with children.

“Protecting God’s Children:” Virtus Awareness Program

“Protecting God’s Children” is a program developed by the National Catholic Risk Retention Group at the request of Msgr. Kevin McCoy, past board chairman. “VIRTUS” is a series of training programs whose name is derived from the Latin word that means valor. This program has many components including education, community awareness and prevention.

If you suspect that a child is being abused, immediately notify the Child Abuse Hotline:

Iowa: 1-800-362-2178

For more information about our diocesan Safe Environment Program, contact:

Dan Ellis- Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator

712-233-7517

dane@sdiocese.org

(Information above taken from the Sioux City Diocesan website, www.sdiocese.org/about.cfm?subpage=1445799)

Precepts of the Church

1. To keep holy the day of the Lord's Resurrection; to worship God by participating in Mass every Sunday and the holy days of obligation; to avoid those activities that would hinder renewal of the soul and body on the Sabbath (needless work or unnecessary shopping).

Sundays and other Holy Days of Obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass. (C.C.C. 2192)

* Mass Schedule: Saturday @ 4:00pm, Sacred Heart;

Sunday @ 10:30am, Sacred Heart

* Holy Days: see church bulletin for times

Holy Days of Obligation:

December 8 – Immaculate Conception of the Blessed

Virgin Mary

December 25 – Nativity of the Lord

January 1 – Mary, Mother of God

May 29/June 1 – Ascension of the Lord

August 15 – Assumption of the Blessed Virgin

November 1 – All Saints

2. To lead a sacramental life; to receive Holy Communion frequently and the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly—minimally at least once a year (annual confession is obligatory only if serious sin is involved); minimally also, to receive Holy Communion at least once a year between the first Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday. **“Without being strictly necessary, confession of everyday faults (venial sins) is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church. Indeed the regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit.” (C.C.C. 1458)**

Sacrament of Reconciliation Time:

Saturdays @ 3:00PM

Communal Penance: During the Season of Advent and Lent

3. To study Catholic teaching in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, to be confirmed, and then continue to study and advance the cause of Jesus Christ.

4. To observe the marriage laws of the Church; to give religious training, by example and word, to one's children; to use parish schools and catechetical programs.
5. To strengthen and support the Church—one's own parish community and parish priests, the world-wide Church, and the Pope.
6. To do penance, including abstaining from meat and fasting from food on the appointed days.
7. To join in the missionary spirit and apostolate work of the church.

Regulations on Fasting and Abstinence

1. Generally, the laws of fasting require that on the designated days the person eat just one full meal, two smaller meals, and avoid eating between meals. Abstinence laws require that the person avoid meat altogether.
2. The regulations governing abstinence from meat apply to all Catholics age fourteen years and older. Adults who have completed their 18th year until beginning of the 60th year are bound by the regulations that govern fasting. Pregnant women and sick people are excused from the regulations.
3. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of both fasting and abstinence; all other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence only.
4. In addition, the Church encourages its adult members to observe some form of penance, perhaps including some kind of fast or abstinence, on all Fridays throughout the year.
5. The Church also calls for fasting prior to receiving Communion during the Mass. In this case, the fast helps us prepare our mind and heart for the great gift of the Eucharist by doing something physical to help us focus our attention. Church laws call for us to avoid all food and drink, with the exception of water and medicine, for one hour before receiving Communion. Again, this regulation does not apply to sick people or others for whom such restrictions would jeopardize health.

(Taken from the Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, 2004)