

Saint John Vianney  
& Holy Family

Faith Formation K-10

**Student & Parent Handbook**

# Saint John Vianney & Holy Family Faith Formation

## *Mission Statement*

The mission of our Faith Formation program is to support children and their families as they grow in their Catholic faith through prayer, education, and experience in a safe environment.

Our program's goal is to provide quality education which facilitates:

- respect and responsibility for all of God's creation
- building community
- strengthening families
- participation in social justice
- celebrating faith through worship and the sacraments
- bringing youth closer to God
- practicing faith in daily life
- being a living witness of Jesus



## **WE, THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Winona,  
are a community of hope, centered in Christ.  
As members of the universal Church gathered around our bishop,  
we strive to live out our gospel calling ever anew.

Devoted to the gospel we have received from generations past,  
we seek to hand on a living faith for the generations to come.  
Conscious of our own shortcomings and sin,  
we trust in the power of Christ  
to bring new things to birth through us.

Thus, our journey of faith  
is a sharing in the dying and rising of Jesus.  
Through the power of the Spirit,  
we have the courage to risk everything  
as together we labor to witness to the gospel,  
celebrate the mysteries of faith, and reach out to others.

Called forth from the table of His Body as a faith community,  
we shall create a future where all rejoice in God's gifts.  
Rooted in the fields and towns of southern Minnesota,  
we face the challenges of a changing world with love.  
Convinced that we bring life-giving values  
to the social and economic structures of our heartland,  
we proclaim aloud our respect  
for the sanctity of life, the family, and all creation.

Given at Winona As a Statement of Our Mission on September 24, 1994  
~ Most Reverend John M. Quinn, Bishop of Winona

September 7, 2016

Dear St. John Vianney Faith Formation Family,

The staff, catechists, and volunteers would like to thank you for choosing St. John Vianney / Holy Family Faith Formation for your student's religious education.

This handbook is given to you so that you might be able to understand the policies and guidelines that help us to govern St. John Vianney/Holy Family Faith Formation in the most efficient way. We hope that you will find it useful in answering questions that you might have over the coming weeks and months. Please feel free to call the faith formation office if there are questions or concerns that are not addressed in this handbook.

Our mission at St. John Vianney/Holy Family Faith Formation is to provide you and your children with a faith community which fosters a Christian environment. This mission is achieved through a cooperation effort of parents, catechists, and children. We hope we have your support and prayers as we help build a foundation in faith with your children at St. John Vianney/Holy Family Faith Formation.

You may call the faith formation office anytime to schedule a visit. We welcome your visits, calls, or comments.

*God's Blessings,*

*Tamarae Schmidt & Katie Stone*

## **Absences**

The Faith Formation Staff must receive verification by the parent/guardian in the event that the child must be excused for illness or appointment. Verification can be in writing, by email, by telephone, or in person. NO student will be permitted to leave the class without parental permission and the permission of the Director of Faith Formation.

## **Absence Policy**

Regular attendance is essential to a student's success in religious education. Our curriculum is taught in sequence, requiring the understanding of each concept in order of its presentation. Persistent absenteeism creates a general hardship for a student and is regarded as a very serious problem.

The following circumstances are the recognized excuses for Faith Formation class absence:

- a. personal illness
- b. family illness
- c. death in the family
- d. religious holiday

The parent is required to give advance notice of any type of absence.

Absence for such reasons as camping, vacations and non-school activities are discouraged.

If a student has missed two or more faith formation classes, a conference with the DRE must take place.

## **Accidents / Illness**

In case of accidents or illness at class, parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible. If the parents/guardians can not be reached, the listed emergency number contact will be called. Please notify the faith formation office when emergency information changes. **Tamarae office #235-5639**      **Katie office #235-9064**

## **Cancelation of Faith Formation Class**

Cancelation of Faith Formation Class takes place only during circumstances such as **extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis.** The school board and administrators are aware of the hardship which can be caused by abrupt cancelation. Therefore, faith formation will not be canceled unless a significant safety risk has been created. Early dismissal/cancelation of school will be determined by the Superintendent of Schools for the Fairmont Public School System.

Every practical means is used to notify parents of a cancelation i.e. **Remind 101, Email, SJV Youth Facebook page, SJV Youth Twitter page, and via radio stations KSUM-AM 13.70 & KFMC-FM 106.5.**

## **Care of Building and Grounds**

A school building is not a school until it is occupied by students. When a building becomes a school, it takes on character and meaning and expresses itself to the student body and visitors in relation to the respect it is given by the students in its appearance and daily care. We feel it is a matter of personal and parish pride that each and every student make a commitment to do everything possible so that the appearance of our school and grounds expresses a positive message to everyone. This commitment includes using the common sense approach. Trash belongs in trash cans, food is to be eaten only in designated areas, gum and graffiti have no place on the floors or walls. The furniture and equipment in our school are for your use. Please take care of it!

## **Change of Address / Telephone**

It is very important that every student maintain an up-to-date address, email address, and telephone number record with the Faith Formation Program. Notify the Faith Formation staff immediately if you have a change of address or telephone number during the school year.

## **Child Abuse**

By law, parish volunteers are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect situations. By definition, "...child abuse and neglect means the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child under the circumstances which indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or threatened thereby." (The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, P.L. 93427. January 31, 1974)



## **Diocese of Winona - Child Sexual Abuse Policy Information**

The Diocese of Winona will provide a prompt, appropriate and compassionate response to reporters of sexual abuse of a child by any diocesan agent (employees, volunteers, vendors, religious or clergy). Anyone wishing to make a report of an allegation of sexual abuse should call the Victim Assistance Coordinator at 507-454-2270, Extension 255. A caller will be asked to provide his or her name and telephone number. Individuals are also encouraged to take their reports directly to civil authorities. The Diocese of Winona is committed to protecting children, young people and other vulnerable people in our schools, parishes and ministries. The diocesan policy is available on the diocesan web site at www.dow.org under the Safe Environment Program. If you have any questions about the Diocese of Winona's implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, please contact Peter Martin, at 507-858-1264, or pmartin@dow.org.

## **Circle of Grace**

### *What is a Circle of Grace?*

The Catholic Church teaches that God has created each of us as unique and special. Genesis 1:27 tells us that we are created “male and female in God’s image” and that God saw this as “very good.” In that goodness, we are meant to respect ourselves and everyone else as persons created and loved by God. Adults assist young people to recognize God’s love by helping them to understand that each of us lives and moves in a Circle of Grace. You can imagine your own Circle of Grace by putting your arms above your head then circle down in front of your body including side to side. This circle, front to back, holds who you are in your body and through your senses. It holds your very essence in mind, heart, soul, and sexuality.

### *Why is it important to help our young people understand the Circle of Grace?*

God intends our relationships in life to be experiences of divine love. Respectful, nurturing, loving relationships increase our understanding of our own value and help us to love others. It is never too early to help young people understand how very special they are and how relationships in life are called to be sacred. Understanding this can help them to protect the special person they are and to be respectful of others. Adults, as they strive to provide a safe and protective environment, hold the responsibility to help young people understand and respect their own dignity and that of others. A truly safe and protective environment is one where young people recognize when they are safe or unsafe and know how to bring their concerns, fears, and uncertainties to the trusted adults in their lives.

### *How is the Circle of Grace Program different from other protection programs?*

According to research, one in four girls and one in seven boys will be sexually abused by age eighteen. Many protection programs focus on “stranger danger,” however, up to ninety percent of the time the perpetrator is a relative, family friend or other person known to the child/young person. Circle of Grace goes beyond just protection by helping young people understand the sacredness of who they are and how to seek help through their relationships with trusted adults.

### *Goal of the Circle of Grace Program - Grades K-12*

The goal of the Circle of Grace program is to educate and empower children and young people to actively participate in a safe environment for themselves and others.

## **Communication with Parents & Students Grades K-6**

The following communication tools will be used to keep you update-to-date and informed:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Website</b> St. John Vianney/Holy Family | <a href="http://sjvhf.org/religious-ed-k-6th/">http://sjvhf.org/religious-ed-k-6th/</a> |
| <b>Remind</b> K-6 SJV Faith Formation       | <a href="https://remind.com/join/k6sj">remind.com/join/k6sj</a>                         |
| <b>Phone</b>                                | 235-5639  |
| <b>Email</b>                                | <a href="mailto:sjv-tamarae@midconetwork.com">sjv-tamarae@midconetwork.com</a>          |

## **Communication with Parents & Students Grades 7-10**

The following communication tools will be used to keep you update-to-date and informed:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Website</b> St. John Vianney/Holy Family | <a href="http://sjvhf.org/religious-education-7th-10th/">http://sjvhf.org/religious-education-7th-10th/</a> |
| <b>7-10 Weekly Update</b>                   | <a href="http://sjvhf.org/weekly-updates-7-10th/">http://sjvhf.org/weekly-updates-7-10th/</a>               |
| <b>Remind</b> 7-10 SJV Faith Formation      | <a href="http://remind.com/join/710sj">remind.com/join/710sj</a>  |
| <b>Facebook</b> St John Vianney Youth       | <a href="http://www.facebook.com/StJohnVianneyYouth/">www.facebook.com/StJohnVianneyYouth/</a>              |
| <b>Twitter page</b> SJV Youth Ministry      | <a href="https://twitter.com/SJVFairmont">https://twitter.com/SJVFairmont</a>                               |
| <b>Phone</b>                                | 507-235-9064  |
| <b>Email</b>                                | <a href="mailto:sjvyouthministry@gmail.com">sjvyouthministry@gmail.com</a>                                  |

## **Curriculum K-6**

Classes will meet on **Wednesday at 5:30-6:30 PM** in St. John Vianney School, September through April.

- The curriculum used will be the “**Image of God**” series, published by Ignatius Press.
- Sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are part of the Second Grade curriculum.
- Additional activities at the elementary level include service projects, prayer services, Ash Wednesday Mass, Faith Sharing Centers with parents for grades 1,2,4, and 5, a Seder Meal for grade 6, and Activity Day for grades K & 3, and Advent & Lenten Adventures.

## **Curriculum 7-10**

### **Grade 7 & 8**

**Classes are held on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:15 PM** at St. John Vianney School, September through April.

Curriculum : *Theology of the Body / Encounter / Altaration by Ascension Press.*

- *God’s Word, Your World! (Reflections of the Sunday Readings for Teens)*
- Prayer services, service projects, Advent & Lenten Adventures, the Rosary & Eucharist celebrations will be included in the curriculum.

## **Grade 9 & 10**

**Classes are held on Wednesday evenings** from 7:00-8:15 PM at St. John Vianney School, September through April.

- Curriculum : “Chosen” by Ascension Press
- God’s Word, Your World! (Reflections of the Sunday Readings for Teens
- Prayer services, service projects, Advent & Lenten Adventures, the Rosary & Eucharistic celebrations will be included in the curriculum.

10th grade curriculum includes Confirmation preparation and includes the “Chosen” Confirmation curriculum. This year of preparation includes choosing a sponsor, sponsor meetings, additional service projects, a retreat experience, choosing a Confirmation saint name, and other events leading to the celebration of Confirmation.

## **Discipline Policy**

At SJVHF, a Christian faith community, each person must be willing to accept responsibility for creating an atmosphere for teaching and learning. It is the right of every individual to develop his/her potential as a human person. It’s likewise the responsibility of every individual to respect this right in others. The teaching and example of Jesus is a model for our behavior. It becomes necessary, however, to establish some rules to allow catechists and students to live and work together effectively and to promote the well-being of every individual. When a member of SJVHF Faith Formation community fails to show respect for self, for others, or for property, some action may be necessary in order to remind the offender that such behavior violates the rights and well-being of others.

### Progressive Discipline:

1<sup>st</sup> : Catechist and Student

2<sup>nd</sup>: Catechist, Student, and DRE

3<sup>rd</sup> : Parent + DRE + Catechist + Student meeting

**GOAL:** Respect for authority, respect for all students, and regard for property should govern student behavior at all times.

**Students are expected to behave according to the Ten Commandments, The Beatitudes, The Golden Rule, and all applicable federal, state, and local laws. It is not possible to include every single behavior expectation. The key word is Respect; respect of self, for others, and for property.**



## **Dress Code**

Students are encouraged to dress comfortably with clothing that is practical, simple, and modest. Tennis shoes are the best footwear because they are versatile. Clothing with inappropriate pictures or sayings will not be allowed. Hats are not permitted to be worn inside the school building during regular faith formation class hours or scheduled activities. Students whose appearance is deemed inappropriate by the catechist/DRE will be asked to contact their parent/guardian that same day to have the clothing corrected. During warm weather the students may wear shorts. The length of the shorts needs to be at the student's fingertips when they stand with their arms at the side and shoulders relaxed.

**Youth Mass Attire:** Pants or jeans, shirts/sweaters/sweatshirts with minimal and/or no writing. No leggings, tank tops or exposed midriff allowed. Thank you for being reverent in church.

## **Drop off / Pickup & Supervision Policy**

**Grades K-6 Faith Formation Parents** - K-6<sup>th</sup> graders will be supervised for recess from 5:00 - 5:30 pm on the Wednesdays we have classes. After 6:30 pm , all K-6 youth need to wait by the front door until their ride comes.

*There is no supervision outside of class time after 5:30 pm.*

**Grades 7-10 Faith Formation Parents** - We ask you to drop off your child(ren) no earlier than 6:50 pm and pick up your child(ren) no later than 8:25 pm.

*Please note: There is no playground or other supervision after 5:30 pm.*

## **Emergency Information**

In case of emergency, each student is required to have on file at the Faith Formation office the following information:

1. Parent(s) or guardian(s) name(s)
2. Complete and up-to-date address
3. Home phone and parent(s)/guardian(s) work phone
4. Emergency phone number of friend or relative

## **Faith Formation K-10, SJV School & Hope Shop Monthly Food Collection**

Each class will take turns distributing brown paper grocery bags, with a list of needed items, on the 2nd Saturday & Sunday of each month at the end of Mass.

The classes haul the filled bags on the 3rd Saturday & Sunday of the month to the Hope Shop at the end of Mass.

Schedule will posted on weekly updates, monthly newsletters, and sjvhf website.

## **Fundraising**

### **Pick a Day, Pray and Pay**

We have a new fundraiser to support our Youth Ministry Program – DOW Summer Camps and other activities. The purpose of this fundraiser is to help supplement student trips costs. The duration of Pick a Day, Pray & Pay is 120 days or 4 months. Please click on the links below to see how the program works and how you can help!

### **Semi-Annual Bake Sales (Fall & Spring)**

Bake Sales proceeds will be reserved to pay for chaperone costs for the summer camps.

### **Schwan's Cares**

Schwan's Home Delivery offers 350 delicious foods, flash-frozen at the peak of freshness and delivered to your door. Through Schwans-Cares, you can order from Schwan's and help SJV Youth Ministry to raise money for summer camps and other YM activities.

- Schwans-Cares.com
- Campaign ID: 20657
- 5% profit

### **Butterbraids (Spring)**

This opportunity is for individual fundraising. Students can raise \$5 per braid sold. DRE will use Sign-up Genius to schedule After-Mass sales. Students are encouraged to sell outside of the church setting. **It is the students' responsible to take the orders / receive payment at the time of the order / delivery of the product.**

## **Harassment Policy**

St. John Vianney/Holy Family Faith Formation is committed to the Gospel Way of Life. The Gospel Way means reverence and respect. Our faith formation program confirms that everyone has a right to be respected and safe. Any form of intimidation, violence, harassment, or bullying will not be allowed. This includes racial, religious, verbal, physical or sexual harassment or violence.

Behaviors that violate reverence and respect may include, but are not limited to: 1) name calling, jokes or rumors; 2) pulling on clothing; 3) graffiti, notes, writing in textbooks; 4) hurtful words about weight, complexion, height, ability, status; 5) unwelcome touching of a person or clothing; 6) any words or actions that make you feel uncomfortable, embarrass you, hurt your feelings, or make you feel bad; 7) disparaging remarks to a person about gender or sexual orientation; 8) retaliation; 9) mockery; 10) laughing at another's mistakes; 11) falsely blaming. If any words or actions make one feel uncomfortable or fearful, you need to tell your catechist, your director of religious education, another staff member or trusted adult. The issue will be handled by the DRE. The incident will be documented and given to the pastor. To the extent reasonable, the complaint will be kept private. SJVHF Faith Formation takes seriously all reports of racial, religious, verbal, physical, or sexual harassment. It will take appropriate actions based upon this report.

## **Photo Policy**

Parent permission to photograph and/or video their children. I grant St. John Vianney & Holy Family Catholic Churches, its employees, and volunteers:

- the right to photograph or video my child(ren) in connection with church-related events and activities.
- to use and publish any photo or video of my child(ren) in print and electronically.
- may use such photographs and video of my child(ren) with or without their name and for any lawful purpose, including for such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and web content.

\* *Photo / Video release forms will be completed on an annual basis.*

## **Sacramental Preparations**

Sacraments in order and preferred age:

- Baptism (infant)
- Reconciliation (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)
- Eucharist (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)
- Confirmation (9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> grade)

Typically, children who have been baptized receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist during their second grade year. If a child has not been baptized, they need to do so before receiving Reconciliation. If a child has been baptized but are third grade or older, they will have to set up a plan with the director about when they can receive the necessary sacraments. Confirmation preparations begin in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and are completed at the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Sacramental preparations are a part of the Faith Formation Program but also include activities outside of class time, such as Centers (Reconciliation & Eucharist) and retreats (Eucharist and Confirmation). According to Diocesan policy, youth must be in the Faith Formation Program an entire year prior to enrolling in the sacramental program.

## **Safe Driver Training- "Be Smart - Drive Safe"**

Catholic Mutual has developed "Be Smart - Drive Safe" to provide a convenient defensive driving course to aid in the reduction of auto accidents and injuries. This "online" course is offered at no cost and provides multiple benefits to any employee or volunteer who drives on behalf of the Church. See Appendix A for more details.

## **Service Projects**

- Food Collection for the poor and needy – (see Faith Formation K-10, SJV School & Hope Shop Monthly Food Collection)
- Trick or Eat Food Collection – volunteer parent drivers (see Safe Driver Training)
- Hope Café – Monthly Hot Meal for the Community

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is the unwanted or uninvited sexual behavior of one person toward another. Sexual harassment is a form of violence and is not allowed at St. John Vianney Faith Formation Classes. Sexual harassment can be in the form of words, touch, teasing, threats, or other behavior. Anyone might be the victim--boy or girl, young or old. Harassment should be reported immediately to your catechists, director of religious education, a priest or to a trusted adult.

## **Telephone**

Important messages will be delivered to children and catechists immediately; otherwise, messages will be relayed in a timely manner. The office telephone is a business phone and is to be used with discretion. Students are not allowed to use the phone to make personal arrangements (such as requesting permission to go to another student's home after class). The faith formation office is equipped with a voice mail answering system so individuals may contact the school anytime to leave messages.

**Cell phone usage is not allowed during class hours.**

## **Valuables**

Common sense and consideration is the best guide in determining whether or not to bring personal possessions to school. The faith formation staff and volunteers can't be responsible for valuables which students bring to class. It is recommended that students leave all valuables at home. Electronic games, ipods etc. must be left at home.

## **Vandalism**

Our school and school equipment is parish and state property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property is cause for immediate suspension and possible expulsion. If a student accidentally causes damage, they should report it to their catechist immediately so that the damage is not misconstrued as vandalism.

## Virtus Training

### **Protecting God's Children® Program**

The National Catholic Risk Retention Group, Inc., is pleased to present a brief introduction to our Protecting God's Children program. This "Flash" presentation exemplifies the information provided in our child sexual abuse awareness sessions for adults. If you have attended an awareness session, this presentation will repeat some of the information presented in our two awareness videos: *A Time to Protect God's Children* and *A Plan to Protect God's Children*. Please note. If you are required to complete online training, the material on this page is merely a preview and does not count for your required training. You'll need to log into your account in order to access your required online training

To preview the Protecting God's Children awareness session, please use this link below to start the 11-minute presentation.. <https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/pgc5.swf> And, either way, please visit our website frequently. New risk management information is added each week, with an emphasis on articles and interactive features designed to increase the public awareness about child sexual abuse, and to provide adults with the knowledge and tools they need to help prevent and, if necessary, to respond appropriately to child sexual abuse.

Who has to attend the Protecting God's Children awareness programs? There are three categories of people who are required to attend an awareness session. They are: 1) All clergy, 2) all employees of the Diocese of Winona and their parishes and schools, 3) all volunteers who have regular contact with children.

What does "regular contact with children" mean? Regular contact means planned and on-going contact with children, vulnerable adults or the elderly. These are the critical "third party eyes" we need to help us spot others who put our children at risk.

## Volunteering

Ways to volunteer:

- Baker
- Catechist
- Catechist assistant
- Child Care
- DRE Assistant
- Driver for event or service project
- Prayer Listener

All of our volunteers , who work with children, are required to have:

- Background Checks (every 5 years)
- Virtus (Safe Environment ) Training (once)
- Safe Driver Training (when applicable)
- Signed Volunteer Code of Conduct (annually)

## **Resources**

### *Websites*

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <a href="http://www.sjvhf.org">www.sjvhf.org</a>   | Saint John Vianney & Holy Family      |
| <a href="http://www.dow.org">www.dow.org</a>   | Diocese of Winona                     |
| <a href="http://www.usccb.org">www.usccb.org</a>   | US Conference of Catholic Bishops     |
| <a href="http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html">w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html</a>                                       | Vatican - The Holy See                |
| <a href="http://wordonfire.org/resources/video/">wordonfire.org/resources/video/</a>   | Word on Fire – Bishop Robert Baron    |
| <a href="http://ascensionpresents.com/videos_categories/fr-mike-schmitz/">ascensionpresents.com/videos_categories/fr-mike-schmitz/</a> | Ascension Presents – Fr. Mike Schmitz |
| <a href="http://safekids.com/kids-rules-for-online-safety/">safekids.com/kids-rules-for-online-safety/</a>                             | Safe Kids.com - online safety         |
| <a href="http://www.virtusonline.org">www.virtusonline.org</a>   | Virtus Online                         |
| <a href="http://www.loyolapress.com">www.loyolapress.com</a>   | Sacrament Curriculum                  |
| <a href="http://www.ignatius.com">www.ignatius.com</a>   | K-6 Faith Formation Curriculum        |
| <a href="http://study.ascensionpress.com/programs">http://study.ascensionpress.com/programs</a>  | 7-10 Faith Formation Curriculum       |

## **Additional Resources**

The precepts of the Church are duties that the Catholic Church requires of all the faithful. Also called the commandments of the Church, they are binding under pain of mortal sin, but the point is not to punish. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church explains, the binding nature "is meant to guarantee to the faithful the indispensable minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth of love of God and neighbor." If we follow these commands, we'll know that we're headed in the right direction spiritually.

This is the current list of the precepts of the Church found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Traditionally, there were seven precepts of the Church; the other two may be found at the end of this list.

### **The Sunday Duty**

The first precept of the Church is "You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor." Often called the Sunday Duty or the Sunday Obligation, this is the way in which Christians fulfill the Third Commandment: "Remember, keep holy the Sabbath day." We participate in the Mass, and we refrain from any work that distracts us from a proper celebration of Christ's Resurrection.

### **Confession/Reconciliation**

The second precept of the Church is "You shall confess your sins at least once a year." Strictly speaking, we only need to take part in the Sacrament of Confession if we have committed a mortal sin, but the Church urges us to make frequent use of the sacrament and, at a minimum, to receive it once each year in preparation for fulfilling our Easter Duty.

### **The Easter Duty**

The third precept of the Church is "You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season." Today, most Catholics receive the Eucharist at every Mass they attend, but it wasn't always so. Since the Sacrament of Holy Communion binds us to Christ and to our fellow Christians, the Church requires us to receive it at least once each year, sometime between Palm Sunday and Trinity Sunday (the Sunday after Pentecost Sunday).

### **Fasting and Abstinence**

The fourth precept of the Church is "You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church." Fasting and abstinence, along with prayer and almsgiving, are powerful tools in developing our spiritual life. Today, the Church requires Catholics to fast only on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and to abstain from meat on the Fridays during Lent. On all other Fridays of the year, we may perform some other penance in place of abstinence.

### **Supporting the Church**

The fifth precept of the Church is "You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church." The Catechism notes that this "means that the faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his own ability." In other words, we don't necessarily have to tithe (give ten percent of our income), if we can't afford it; but we should also be willing to give more if we can. Our support of the Church can also be through donations of our time, and the point of both is not simply to maintain the Church but to spread the Gospel and bring others into the Church, the Body of Christ.

### **Two More...**

Traditionally, the precepts of the Church numbered seven instead of five. The other two precepts were:

- To obey the laws of the Church concerning Matrimony.
- To participate in the Church's mission of Evangelization of Souls.

**Both are still required of Catholics**, but they are no longer included in the Catechism's official listing of the precepts of the Church.

# Appendix A

## Defensive Driving Training

- [www.cmgconnect.org](http://www.cmgconnect.org)
- Choose Diocese from the Drop Down List
- Complete account information, address, username and password
- Parish location and choose: volunteer
- Choose Defensive Driving Curriculum

