



CHURCH OF THE LITTLE FLOWER

FAITH FORMATION for Children

PARENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

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Pastor

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The Shared Mission of Families and Parish

The Gospel – the “good news” – of our Christian Catholic faith is that God has loved us with an infinite love through His Son, Jesus Christ, who became man in order to heal us from sin and lead us back to God. We have received this good news from countless individuals throughout history. Now it is our turn to hand on this good news to our children.

The work of Faith Formation at the Church of the Little Flower is our shared mission - a collaborative effort between families, especially parents, and the parish community.

In particular, we request that parents

- Worship God together with your children by participating in Mass every Sunday. At the Mass, our closest possible meeting with God takes place, providing an encounter beyond what can be provided in our classrooms.
- Engage with the prayers and lessons that the children learn during Faith Formation sessions.
- Be involved in the life of the parish.

On the part of the parish, we pledge to

- Provide an environment in which your children will be taught the Catholic faith in an age-appropriate manner, in fidelity to the teachings of the Church, in a spirit of prayer.
- Foster a sense of community and belonging to the Body of Christ at Little Flower Parish.
- Encourage discussion about what it means to live the faith, and witness to it.

Relationship with Archdiocese of Washington

The Church of the Little Flower is a parish of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington (ADW); it is a local community of people in union with the Archdiocese and its Archbishop, which in turn is part of the universal Church under the leadership of the Pope, the Holy Father. As such, Little Flower supports the teachings, initiatives and policies of the Archdiocese.

Curriculum

The Faith Formation program catechists use the Curriculum Guide prepared by the Archdiocesan Secretariat for Catechesis; for additional instructional support, they utilize textbooks approved by the Archdiocese of Washington. The grades K, 1, & 4-6 teachers use the book series *Finding God: Our Response to God's Gifts*, from Loyola Press. The 2nd grade uses *Renewed & Received* from Ascension Press as they prepare for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. 7th and 8th grades use *The Chosen* from Ascension Press as they prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

This year Little Flower will inaugurate an Atrium, where children ages 3 & 4 will experience the faith through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

Attendance and Promptness

Attending Mass and class regularly is essential for the growth and authentic participation of your child(ren) in our Catholic faith. It also helps them to establish a community of faith as they build friendships with their classmates.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each session. If your child needs to arrive late, be dismissed early, or miss the session, please email their teacher and the office at ibarry@lfparish.org.

Families should respect the significance of this hour by being prompt.

Parents of children in sacramental preparation years (First Communion: 1-2, Confirmation: 7-8) should note that consistent attendance will foster your child's readiness to receive the sacrament at the expected time. Depending on the nature and number of lessons missed, parents may be asked to bring their child to the Church during the week for make-up lessons.

Conduct

We strive to maintain classroom environments that are ordered and safe places for prayer and study of spiritual and religious subject matter. Each person is created by God in his image and likeness and should be treated with respect and consideration.

Children are expected to be engaged in the lesson. Cell phones and other electronics are to be silenced and kept in their pocket or bag. If a child's behavior impedes the learning environment, the teacher will remind the child of appropriate behavior expected in the classroom. If the behavior persists, he or she will be sent out of the classroom to the Director of Faith Formation. If necessary, a meeting with parents will be arranged.

Inclement Weather

If sessions need to be cancelled due to inclement weather, an email will be sent no later than 8am on Sunday morning.

Procedures for Drop off and Pick up

Sessions are from 10:15-11:15 on Sundays in the school. Children & families meet in the outside quad area, near the large portable structure, after the 9am Mass.

At 10:15, the Director or a catechist will lead prayer and give announcements. Children then go to their classrooms with their catechists. They are dismissed at 11:15am from the same area.

The Atrium session lasts 15 minutes longer, and ends at 11:30.

2026-2027 Faith Formation Directory

Catechists are volunteers and we are so grateful for their time and dedication to the faith formation of our children.

GRADE	TEACHER	EMAIL
Ages 3 & 4	Mary Hamm, <i>Atrium - Good Shepherd</i>	atrium@lfparish.org
K	Maureen Smith	kindergartenff@lfparish.org
1	Perrine Arvis	grade1ff@lfparish.org
2	Matthew Samson, <i>seminarian</i>	grade2ff@lfparish.org
3	Katie Carney	grade3ff@lfparish.org
4	Bridget Maybud	grade4ff@lfparish.org
5	Amanda Cabe	grade5ff@lfparish.org
6	Connie Lausten	grade6ff@lfparish.org
7	Bethann Brault	grade7ff@lfparish.org
8	Christian Barry	grade8ff@lfparish.org

2026-2027 Faith Formation Calendar - Important Dates

For the sacraments of First Penance, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation, Faith Formation (FF), Little Flower School (LFS), and Private Catholic School (PCS) children join together for some of the preparations.

Sunday, Sept. 13, School	Grades Atrium-8 FF sessions begin
Thursday, Sept 17 7-8:15pm, PH	Confirmation Mtg & Ice Cream Social for all FF, LFS, PCS 8th grade children & parents
Sunday, Sept 20 9am, Church	Catechetical Sunday - Blessing of the Catechists for all FF families
Thursday, Sept 24 7-8:15pm, PH	FF Program Review & Dessert Social w/ Catechists For all grades FF Parents except 2nd and 8th
Sunday, Oct. 4	Confirmation Enrollment Form Due
Thursday, Oct 8 7-8:15pm, PH	First Reconciliation & Communion Mtg & Social for all FF, LFS, PCS 2nd grade parents
Saturday, Oct.17 9am-4pm	Confirmation Retreat at Franciscan Monastery for all FF, LFS, PCS 8th grade children
Tuesday, Oct. 27	Confirmation Sponsor Form & Baptismal Cert. Due
Sunday, Nov 1 9am, Church	Confirmation Enrollment Mass for all FF, LFS, PCS 8th grade children
Sunday, Nov 22 1-3pm, PH	All Parish Shoebox Service Project
Sunday, Nov 29	No sessions (Thanksgiving Break)
Tuesday, Dec 2 5:30-7pm, PH	All Parish Family Pizza & Advent Wreath Making
Saturday, Dec 5 5pm, Church & PH	All Parish St. Nick's Mass & Social w/ St. Nick
Sunday, Dec 13 10:15-11:30am, PH	Advent Pageant & Cookie Social
Sunday, Dec 21 - Sun. Jan. 4	No sessions (Christmas Break)
Sundays, Jan 10 - Feb 21, PH	Confirmation Prep Sessions (CORE)
<i>8th grade Private Catholic School (PCS) children join 8th grade Faith Formation (FF) sessions focused on the core missions of the Catholic church and our Little Flower parishioners who support them. LFS children are encouraged to attend these sessions.</i>	
Sunday, Jan 17	No sessions (Martin Luther King, Jr.)
Sunday, Feb 7	Confirmation Interview Form due for all 8th FF, LFS, PCS children
Sunday, Feb. 14	No sessions (President's Day)
Wednesday, Feb.10 7pm, Church	Ash Wednesday Mass
Tuesday, Feb. 18 6:30-8:30pm, School	Confirmation Interviews for all 8th grade FF, LFS, PCS Confirmandi
Saturday, Feb. 20 9am, Church	Celebration of First Reconciliation for all 2nd grade FF, LFS, PCS children
Friday, Feb 26 6-8pm, Church & PH	All Parish Dinner & Family Stations of the Cross
Weds, Mar 10 4:30-6pm, Church	Confirmation Rehearsal for all 8th grade FF, LFS, PCS Confirmandi
Sat, Mar 13 10am, Church	Celebration of Confirmation Mass!
Sun, Mar 14 after 9am Mass, PH	All Parish Congratulations Party
Sundays, Mar 21 - Apr. 4	No sessions (Easter Break)
Sat, Apr 10 9am-12pm, PH	First Communion Retreat for all 2nd grade FF, LFS, PCS children and parents
Wednesday, Apr 28 4-5pm, Church	First Communion Rehearsal for all 2nd grade FF, LFS, PCS children only
Saturday, May 1 10am, Church	Celebration of First Communion Mass!
Sunday, May 2 9am, Church	Mass followed by May Crowning
Sunday, May 2 after 9am Mass, PH	All Parish Congratulations Party
Sunday, May 9	No sessions (Mother's Day)
Sunday, May 16 10:15-11:15, School & PH	Last Sessions & Year End Social for all FF families