



Elementary Faith Formation Policies

Registration

Registration is open only to those families registered at St. Pius X Parish before June 23, 2025. There are two separate registration deadlines for the 2025-2026 academic year. Families wishing to enroll their child in Confirmation Prep Cohort 1 must register by **August 15, 2025**. Families wishing to enroll their child in Grades 1-5 and Confirmation Prep Cohort 2 must register by **September 22, 2025**. Registrations will not be processed after these deadlines, without exception. All new student registrations must include a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate and record of any other Sacraments they have received.

Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Once a class reaches capacity, students will be placed in their next available choice or will receive a refund to the original method of payment if a family chooses to withdraw. **We DO NOT accept requests for students to be placed with friends**, and there may be multiple sections of any given grade level. We are not responsible for any promises to your child that they will be placed with a friend. Instead, please encourage your child to meet other children in the parish who they may not have otherwise met.

Mass Attendance

In brief, the Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith: "Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking." (CCC 1327)

Every student enrolled in Elementary Faith Formation at St. Pius X is required to attend Mass every Sunday and on all Holy Days of Obligation. Families are expected to attend most of those Masses at the parish. Instructions for signing in will be posted at all entrances of the church and will be live immediately following each Mass. If you attend Mass at another parish because of travel, you must obtain a bulletin from that parish signed by the celebrating priest to be turned in to your child's catechist that same week. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

Program Attendance and Classroom Behavior

Enrollment in Sacramental Preparation at St. Pius X is a year-long commitment. Classes begin promptly at 4:30PM each week, and each student is expected to arrive on time and prepared for class. If any extenuating circumstances arise in your family that result in extended periods of absence, please contact the office immediately.

We DO NOT allow early dismissal from Elementary Faith Formation for any reason. If a short-term conflict arises (e.g., illness, doctor's appointments, or activities) parents may request that the student complete their lessons at home for that time. This request must be submitted in writing to Shari Mellinger in the Faith Formation Office using the form provided.

Our catechists have volunteered their free time each week to share their faith with your children. Disrespectful and disruptive behavior towards other students, catechists, staff, the Religious Education Center, or learning materials will result in immediate removal from the program. If your child has any specific learning or behavioral special needs, please indicate this on your family's registration so that we can best serve them.

Parent Expectations & Requirements

Parents are expected and required to act as an example of the courtesy, respect, responsibility, and Christian attitude expected of their children throughout the year. Disrespectful behavior towards other parents, students, catechists, or staff will not be tolerated.

Parents of children enrolled in Elementary Faith Formation attend one Prayer & Information Session as part of the program requirements and are encouraged to participate in any of the many other Faith Formation opportunities at the parish. The Prayer and Information Session is scheduled for **Tuesday, September 23 at 7PM**. Parents of children preparing for First Holy Communion or Confirmation attend an additional information session – 7PM on February 25, 2026, for First Holy Communion parents and 7PM on March 18, 2026, for Confirmation parents. Bishop Caggiano has requested that parents of children preparing for their First Holy Communion also attend a special audience with him on September 30, 2025. Details for this deanery-wide audience will be communicated as we receive them.

Pick Up and Drop Off

Please follow all marked and communicated traffic directions and pick up procedures. Note the one-way traffic flow from the Faith Center Office to the Barn exit, which is marked EXIT ONLY.

Use of the Fire Lane in front of the Religious Education Center is PROHIBITED for the safety of everyone in the program. Anyone picking up a child in Elementary Faith Formation must park their vehicle in one of the parking spots on campus. It is the responsibility of the parent to share this information with anyone who may pick up their child(ren) throughout the year. If these safety procedures cannot be followed, we will require each student to be picked up in their classroom by a parent or guardian.

Communication & Calendar

Our calendar *closely* follows that of Fairfield Public Schools and can be found on the Elementary Faith Formation home page, <https://www.st-pius.org/elementary-faith-formation/>, but note that it does not *exactly* follow the FPS calendar. For example, we do not cancel Religious Education for holidays such as Rosh Hashana or Eid. Important details regarding your child's formation will be sent via email or text message using Flocknote, which is designed for parish use and allows us to communicate with you effectively. We will also post these updates on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/SPXElementaryFF, and the St. Pius X website, www.st-pius.org. A cell phone number and at least one email address that your family checks regularly are necessary for effective communication. Our staff is not responsible for any missed communications due to a faulty email address or phone number.

First Communions will be celebrated at Masses on May 2 and May 9, 2026. An additional Mass may be celebrated on May 16, 2026, if registration for the year requires it. Confirmations will be celebrated on Saturday, May 23, 2026. Students will be assigned a First Communion Mass or Confirmation celebration no later than December 31, 2025.

Please note the dates on the calendar highlighted in **grey** and marked as "Remote Day". On these dates, the classes affected will receive a brief assignment to complete at home to keep everyone on track throughout

the year. If you ever have any questions regarding when classes do not meet, please consult the calendar posted on the Elementary Faith Formation home page.

Note: Those participating in the Confirmation Preparation program with Edge are expected to attend all dates throughout their 14-week session, unless otherwise noted.

Safety Procedures & Inclement Weather

Cancellation Due to Inclement Weather: When Fairfield Public Schools close or dismiss early due to inclement weather, we WILL NOT have class that day. Class cancellations will be posted on our Facebook page and the parish website, and a brief lesson will be emailed for review. Closings will also be posted on the WTNH website, www.wtnh.com/weather/closings/, under 'St. Pius X Church – Fairfield.'

Food: Absolutely NO food is allowed in any of the classrooms at any time. Children may bring a reusable water bottle if needed. Please note that the Religious Education Center does not have public water fountains available and plan accordingly.

Medications: We are unable to distribute medications to children. If your child must carry an EpiPen for allergies, please indicate this on your registration to be contacted regarding protocols in place.

Building Safety: The Religious Education Center will be locked during class time. The door will be locked 5 minutes after classes begin and will remain locked until 5 minutes prior to dismissal. During this time, only catechists, volunteers, and staff will be allowed in the Religious Education Center.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Shari Mellinger, Director of Elementary Faith Formation, at sgarcia@st-pius.org (preferred) or (203) 259-4800.

Thank you for allowing us to share the teaching of our Catholic faith and the joy and love of Jesus with your children. We are committed to their growth in the knowledge of our Church and our growth together as a parish.