

Registration Information for K-8 Faith Formation Programs—2023-24

St. Norbert & Our Lady of the Brook parish hopes to be a source of Christ's love, strength, comfort and joy for your families. We are here for you and your children and are committed to journeying together with you to develop and deepen your relationship with Christ.

Our Faith Formation program not only teaches children about our Catholic faith, traditions and Jesus' love, it also engages the entire family on the journey of faith. We offer Faith & Family Nights on a quarterly basis; weekly messages to parents describing what their children are learning in the classroom and ways to continue the conversation and lessons at home; and many parish-wide adult faith formation opportunities.

We are excited about our new parish database!

Our parish has been transitioning to a new comprehensive data management software called PushPay that allows parishioners to engage with the parish community more fully. In addition to the data management of member information and sacrament tracking, it will have both web access and a mobile app that allows you to **access parish calendars** like Faith Formation; **see all messages in one place** from Faith Formation and all church ministries you participate in; and **connect with all members** easily through the app. [*Worried about privacy?* Every person will get to select what contact information—address, phone, and email—is visible to other parishioners.] This app is not quite ready yet—we hope to have it ready mid-to-late summer.

Faith Formation class registration and payment will happen using this new software. Payment will be due at the time of registration. For those parents who wish to volunteer in our Faith Formation program, we offer discounts on tuition. Please complete the volunteer inquiry/sign-up form first before registering your child(ren). We will be in touch with you about the opportunity. If you decide to volunteer, we will give you a discount code to use at the time of registration.

Please refer to <https://www.northbrookcatholic.church/faith-formationre.html> for the registration and volunteer sign-up links.

Currently, we communicate with our families through Flocknote. When the database transition is complete, we will no longer use Flocknote. Instead, we will use the email features in PushPay.

Important Dates to Remember

- Mid-June – K-8 Faith Formation registration opens.
- Monday, July 31—last day to register for early bird pricing
- Sunday, September 10 – Parent and Student meeting for Confirmation (8th graders only)
- Week of September 17 – K-6 and Called Confirmation (7th & 8th grades) programming begins.
- Other key dates are found in the program description section.

Tuition for 2023-24

Our early bird pricing is the same cost as last year. The only difference is the sacramental fee. Each student in sacramental preparation for First Communion and Confirmation (instead of each family) will pay this fee.

Our Faith Formation tuition is midpoint with other parishes in the Northern suburbs. The tuition collected goes towards parish staff salaries, building usage and maintenance costs. As in years past, the parish will be subsidizing a large percentage of our Faith Formation budget.

	Early Bird Pricing (through July 31)	Pricing Aug 1 & later
One child	\$400	\$450
Two or more children	\$600	\$650
Sacramental fee for First Communion and Confirmation (2 nd , 7 th and 8 th grades).	\$75	\$75

As always, we want to make our programming accessible for all families. For those who are experiencing financial difficulties, please contact JoEllen Cattapan, at joellen@northbrookcatholic.church. We will work out a tuition plan that is manageable for your family.

Volunteering

We understand tuition costs might be a challenge for some families, so we offer several volunteer positions with substantial tuition discounts.

Volunteers are vital to our K-8 programming. We cannot do this program without the time and talents of our parents and other parishioners. Our biggest needs are catechists in our K-6 program and for small group facilitators in our 7th and 8th grade Confirmation program. Catechists and small group facilitators get to learn about the Catholic faith right along with the kids, so there is no need to be afraid of these opportunities. Training is also provided.

Volunteer position	Discount
Catechist (teaches in the K-6 program)	\$400
Catechist who team teaches (splits the class sessions with another volunteer)	\$200
Class assistant (serves as a helper to the catechist in the K-6 classrooms.)	\$100
Small group facilitator (7 th and 8 th grade program)	\$100
Hall & parking lot monitors for K-6	\$50 for working 8 sessions

Volunteer Descriptions

K-6 Catechist

Catechists help bring our Catholic faith to life for our children. They do this with their presence, helpful natures, and fun and curious ways to engage the students. Catechists get to learn about their Catholic faith right along with the kids, so there is no need to be afraid of this opportunity. They follow a curriculum for planning lessons and then share the lesson with the children on either Sunday morning (10:45-12noon) or Tuesday evening (4:30-5:45 or 6:15-7:30), two times a month. Classes meet in St. Norbert School and run 1 hour and 15 minutes. Catechists receive **\$400 reduction in tuition** for their work and preparation **or \$100 cash gift** (for those without children in program). Specific training on how to use the Gospel Weeklies curriculum from the publisher is provided. Catechists will also meet regularly via Zoom with other catechists for support and to discuss best practices. The online Virtus/Protecting God's Children and Mandated Reporter trainings and background check are required.

Volunteers who wish to **team teach** (splitting the time in the classroom) will receive **\$200 reduction in tuition or \$50 cash gift** (for those without children in program).

Assistant to the Catechist

This position helps the catechists in the classrooms but does **not** have the responsibility of planning and presenting the lessons. Although anyone can volunteer in this capacity, this is an excellent opportunity for 8th graders who like working with kids and who need Confirmation Service Hours. Assistants receive **\$100 reduction in tuition or a \$50 cash gift** (for those without children in program). 8th graders who volunteer in this capacity can only earn volunteer service hours. The online Virtus/Protecting God's Children and Mandated Reporter trainings and background check are required for adults. Students, age 18 years of age or younger, who volunteer are exempt from the Virtus requirements.

Called Small Group Facilitators (Confirmation formerly named Edge)

Called facilitators are assigned a group of 7th or 8th grade students. They listen and participate in the main lessons that are presented by our Called leaders, and then they meet with their small groups of students (about 10) to discuss what the lesson is about. Facilitators do NOT plan or present the lesson-- just lead a small group discussion and activities, which are already prepared for them. Called facilitators learn about our Catholic faith right along with the students. They just need an appreciation and love of our faith, a patience for working with middle school students, and a willingness to engage a group of young people in learning and discussing our faith. Called meets on Sunday evenings twice a month. Training is provided. Called facilitators receive **\$100 reduction in tuition** for their work **or \$50 cash gift** (for those without children in program). The online Virtus/Protecting God's Children and Mandated Reporter trainings and background check are required.

Techy Team Members (K-6 program on Sunday mornings/Tuesday evenings)

Assist the Director or person in-charge in setting up the computers in the classrooms prior to the start of K-6 classes and help catechists with technology issues during class times. This is a perfect opportunity for 8th graders or high school students with strong skills in technology who need service hours.

Hall and Parking Lot monitors (K-6 program on Sunday mornings/Tuesday evenings)

These volunteers are an adult presence in Grace Hall during the K-6 faith formation classes. They monitor the hallways, pick-up attendance sheets, contact the Director or person in charge if any issues arise, and monitor the parking lot when classes get out. These volunteers arrive 5-10 minutes before classes begin and stay until the children are picked-up by their parents. We will **offer a \$50 tuition discount to those committed to working 8 Faith Formation sessions** throughout the year. The online Virtus/Protecting God's Children and Mandated Reporter trainings and background check are also required for this role.

Called Dinner and Parking Lot Volunteers

Volunteers help with setting up and serving the pizza dinner and with light cleaning afterwards once or twice during the academic year. They also serve as parking lot monitors when the program is over. Volunteers arrive at 6 p.m. on Called Nights (Sundays) to help with meal set-up and then stay through the evening until the students are picked up, which is about 7:45-8 p.m.

Faith Formation Program Descriptions

K-6 program

Our K-6th grade program uses the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies curriculum that combines a complete catechesis of our Catholic faith with the liturgical life of the Church. The content of the program flows from each Sunday's Gospel and students learn about their faith within the rhythms and seasons of the liturgical year. Every lesson goes home to involve parents (who hear the same Gospel on Sunday) making it easier for you to discuss topics with your children.

Classes are held two times per month on Sunday mornings after the 9:30 Mass (10:45 a.m. – 12 noon) and on Tuesday evenings (4:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.). Parents select class day/time at registration. We try to avoid scheduling classes over school breaks and long weekends. We follow District #28 school schedule.

Called Confirmation Program for 7th and 8th grades

Called, our 7th and 8th grade Confirmation program, takes the students out of the classroom and brings them together for a youth group style experience. They meet in one large group for the primary lesson and prayer experience and also in small groups to discuss and make sense of what they learned about our Catholic faith.

Called Confirmation is a **two year program**, so we alternate between two curricula. Last year, we used Pflaum *Gifted in the Spirit* curriculum as the primary source, which focused on the meaning of Confirmation, reviewing the Sacraments of Initiation into the Church (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation) and being called as a Disciple of Christ.

This year, we will be using **Youth Alpha**, which is a video series geared towards middle and senior high school students. *Youth Alpha* is a series of interactive video sessions that explore the basics of the

Christian faith. It asks big questions, like “What am I here for?” and “What’s the purpose of my life?” It also covers the person of Jesus, why he died for us, prayer, how we read the Bible, resisting evil and our responsibility of telling others about Jesus.

Our Called Confirmation Program is designed to help our students...

- Realize they are beloved children of God with distinct gifts to serve others;
- Think critically about their faith and how to integrate it into their daily lives;
- Consider Jesus’ invitation to accept his love and become his disciples.

The sessions begin after the Sunday 5 p.m. Mass with pizza at 6 p.m. and end with prayer about 7:30 pm. The programming takes place in the church basement, as well as the church.

Students are expected to attend weekly Sunday Mass with their families. One easy option is to attend the 5 p.m. Mass on Sundays and the students can head directly to the Church Hall (lower level) at 6 p.m. for the start of the program.

The Parent-Student meeting for Confirmation (**8th graders only**) is **Sunday, September 10 at 6 p.m.** in the Church. Student responsibilities and important dates will be outlined during this meeting.

Our Confirmation date for 8th graders is Sunday, April 14, 2024 at 2 pm.

Confirmation is a two year program. In order to be confirmed in the 8th grade, a student must have been enrolled in a Catholic Faith Formation program or a Catholic school in the 7th grade. If your child missed the 7th grade instruction last year, we will work with you and your student. Contact JoEllen at joellen@northbrookcatholic.church for more information.

Second Grade First Communion and First Reconciliation

The preparation for First Communion and First Reconciliation is an exciting time for your children. They will finally get to *sit at the Big table* and receive the Eucharist along with the members of their family and friends. During the academic year they will learn about the true presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and how Jesus nourishes us in the sacrament. Likewise, they will learn about their responsibility of keeping their hearts open to the love of Jesus and how the sacrament of Reconciliation helps that. We will use a combination of resources for the sacramental preparation: *Blest Are We* text book and *Blessed First Reconciliation & First Communion* videos.

Traditionally, these sacraments are received during a child’s second grade year. For those students who missed preparation due to Covid restrictions or other reasons, we will work with you to help your children make these sacraments. Parents should email JoEllen at joellen@northbrookcatholic.church to arrange a discussion about the options.

Parents and other members of your family play an important role in helping form and prepare your children for these sacraments. It is important that you attend Sunday Mass as a family and to pray with your children every day. *An active prayer and faith life is a practice—it requires our movement, action and repetition to notice the benefits.*

A simple way to teach your kids some of our common Catholic prayers and begin a practice of praying with your children is to pray at bedtime. Download the common Catholic prayers to get started, which is found here: <https://www.northbrookcatholic.church/faith-formationre.html>.

Second Grade Programming Dates—Preparation for First Communion & Reconciliation

- Special recognition Masses for students beginning to prepare for First Communion on Sundays, Oct 15 and 29 (9:30 am Masses)
- Parent (only) Meeting on the Significance of Reconciliation—Tuesday, October 17 from 6:30-7:30 pm in the Church Hall (basement)
- First Reconciliation—Saturday, January 27 from 1:30-3 p.m. at St. Norbert Church
- Parent (only) Meeting on the Significance of the Eucharist—Tuesday, March 12 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the Church Hall (basement)
- First Communion Masses—Saturdays, May 4 and 11 at St. Norbert Church (Practices will happen the Wednesday before at 6:30 pm in the Church)

Study at Home Programs

Study at home programs are available for families whose schedules do not permit regular class attendance. Approval for registration into such programs is required. Parents who are interested in pursuing this option should email JoEllen at joellen@northbrookcatholic.church to arrange a time for a conversation. ***The price for study-at-home programming is the same price for in-person classes.***

Programming Dates

Faith Formation 2023-24 Dates of K-6 Programming

- Classes: Sunday, Sept 17 and Tuesday, Sept 19
- Classes: Sunday, Sept 24 and Tuesday, Sept 26
- Classes: Sunday, Oct 8 and Tuesday, Oct 10
- Classes: Sunday, Oct 22 and Tuesday, Oct 24
- **Faith & Family Night—Monday, October 30, 6:30 in the Parish Hall**—Come learn about the Communion of Saints and All Saints and All Souls Days. 8th grade students will display/present on their Confirmation Saint names.
- Classes: Sunday, Nov 5 and Tuesday, Nov 7
- Classes: Sunday, Nov 12 and Tuesday, Nov 14
- Thanksgiving Break from Nov 19 – Nov 26
- Classes: Sunday, Dec 3 and Tuesday, Dec 5
- **Faith & Family Night: Tuesday, December 12 (Christmas Pageant)**
- Classes: Sunday, Dec 17 and Tuesday, Dec 19
- Classes: Sunday, Jan 7 and Tuesday, Jan 9
- Classes: Sunday, Jan 21 and Tuesday, Jan 23
- Classes: Sunday, Feb 4 and Tuesday, Feb 6

- **Ash Wednesday, February 14**
- **Faith & Family Night: Tuesday, February 20 (Lenten topic)**
- Classes: Sunday, Feb 25 and Tuesday, Feb 27
- Classes: Sunday, March 3 and Tuesday, March 5
- **Parish Pancake Breakfast in school gym after the morning Masses on March 10**
- Classes: Sunday, March 17 and Tuesday, March 19
- Spring Break from March 24-March 31
- **Easter—March 31**
- Last Classes for Year: Sunday, Apr 7 and Tuesday, April 9
- **Faith & Family Night: Tuesday, May 14 (Family Mass and Pizza party)**

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Called Confirmation Session Dates (For 7th & 8th Grades)

- Sunday, September 10: 8th grade parent and student meeting at 6 pm in church
- Wednesday, September 13: Trainings for parents/volunteers serving as small group facilitators at 10 am or 6:30 pm in the Parish Hall (church basement)
- Sunday, September 17: Called Confirmation Session
- Sunday, September 24: Called Confirmation Session
- **Monday, October 2: 8th grade Saint Name & Sponsor Form due to Faith Formation Office**
- Sunday, October 8: Called Confirmation Session
- Sunday, October 22: Called Confirmation Session
- **Monday, October 30: Saint Fair for 8th graders to display/present on Confirmation Saint**
- Sunday, November 5: Called Confirmation Session
- Sunday, November 12: Called Confirmation Session
- Sunday, December 3: Called Confirmation Session
- **Sunday, December 10: 8th grade afternoon retreat with NET Ministries**
- Sunday, December 17: Called Confirmation Session
- Sunday, January 7: Called Confirmation Session
- Sunday, January 21: Called Confirmation Session
- **Thursday, February 1: Pastor's letter due (8th grade)**
- Sunday, February 4: Called Confirmation Session

- **Interviews for 8th graders: In February—specific dates TBD (Online & virtual options)**
- Sunday, February 25: Called Confirmation Session
- Sunday, March 3: Called Confirmation Session
- Sunday, March 17: Called Confirmation Session
- **Confession for 8th graders: Saturdays, March 2, 9 and 16 from 1-2 p.m.**
- **Monday, April 1: 8th grade service reports/hours due**
- Sunday, April 7: Called Confirmation Session
- **Wednesday, April 10: 8th Grade Confirmation Practice at 6:30 pm in the Church (Parent and student attend.)**
- **Sunday, April 14: Confirmation Mass for 8th graders at 2 pm (more details TBA)**