

St. John Paul II Catholic Church
“Beloved Bunch” Faith Mass-Time Nursery

Volunteer’s Handbook

“Jesus said, ‘Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’” (Matthew 19:14)

The purpose of our “Beloved Bunch” faith nursery is to enable parents to attend mass while their 6 months to 4 year old children are cared for and nurtured in the basics of our Catholic faith. Our faith nursery volunteers minister to the youngest members of our parish in a loving environment and introduce them to Catholic prayer, enabling them to later attend mass with their parents.

The volunteer’s role is to provide safe, secure, nurturing, clean and efficient care to the children of our parish. Your ministry responsibilities include leading the children in prayer that they can participate in and understand so that they can come to know Christ and his love for them as well as providing for their basic needs while in your care. This handbook is a guide for you in your ministry as a faith nursery volunteer.

Thank you for your time, your patience and most of all your love!

Pastoral Team Contact: Kristina Vogt ~ 502-751-3562 ~ kvogt@stjohnpaulparish.org

Volunteer Roles & Responsibilities:

The various volunteer responsibilities for our faith nursery are divided into separate roles based on volunteers' preferences and ministry needs.

Faith Formation Leader: adult who leads the children in the pre-planned prayer activities. Directions are provided as well as all necessary materials.

6 months – 2 years Leader: adult who leads the volunteer helpers in the care of the younger children to ensure that all are properly cared for and helps them to participate in the prayer activities.

3's & 4's Leader: adult who leads the volunteer helpers in the care of the older children to ensure that all are properly cared for and helps them to participate in the prayer activities.

Helpers: High school youth or adult volunteers who help either the 6 months – 2 years leader or 3's & 4's leader. The age group that they help with is determined on that day at the nursery based upon the age of the children present.

Adult volunteers must never be left alone with a child except in an emergency when this is the only way to provide proper care and notify parents. Youth volunteers should never be alone with one adult volunteer or with the children entrusted to our care except in an emergency.

Volunteer Policies:

- In addition to loving on our children, safety is our main priority! Keep your eyes and ears on the children at all times.
- Arrive on time. (At least 30 minutes prior to Mass)
- Only scheduled nursery volunteers or others trained volunteers should be permitted in the nursery while it is open.
- Remain for the duration of mass and until all children have been picked up and the nursery cleaned up. The only reason to leave the nursery is during an emergency in order to get that child's parents during Mass.

"Beloved Bunch" Guidelines for Parents:

St. John Paull II Parish is excited to now offer a faith nursery ministry during the 9:30 and 11:15 masses on Sundays. It is our desire to enhance the worship and growing experience of parents by assuring them that their children are growing in their faith, safe, and well cared for during mass. Our nursery is staffed by parents, adult volunteers, and youth volunteers.

We have established these guidelines to be sure that our children (6 months to 4 years old) are well cared for during our faith nursery ministry:

1. Parish families must be registered before leaving their children with the faith nursery ministry during the 9:30 or 11:15 masses. Visiting families may use a "guest card" for their children's care at the faith nursery.
2. Be sure to notify a nursery volunteer of any allergies, special instructions or medical needs your child may have.
3. Please sign your child in and out of nursery care each Sunday he/she attends. Also write your cell phone number in case you need to be reached during mass. (Make sure your phone is on vibrate!)
4. Be sure to leave your diaper bag, with all items clearly marked with your name: formula, diapers, wipes, extra underwear/clothes and any special food or beverages for your child (if needed). Be sure any other items you send with your child are clearly marked with your name.
5. The nursery opens 20 minutes before mass and promptly closes when mass has ended. Children will only be released to adults listed on your registration form.
6. Please do not leave the parish grounds while your children are in our care.
7. There is no biting, kicking, hitting, scratching or foul language allowed at the faith nursery ministry. Children will be placed into time-out (1 minute for each year old) after a warning if behavior is not corrected. If all efforts made by volunteers are unable to correct the behavior, the parent will be called or retrieved from Mass.
8. Parents who regularly use the nursery are asked to volunteer on a monthly basis.

Emergency Policy:

In the case of your child having a medical emergency, a volunteer will come get you in church. Be sure the place you usually sit during mass is noted on your registration form as well as your cell phone number noted on the weekly sign-in sheet. You will be called if you cannot be located in the church.

In event of a fire or other emergency, volunteers will follow the emergency plans already in place. Please be sure to speak with a nursery adult volunteer when you come to pick up your child in such an emergency.

Illness Policy:

To keep our children healthy, a child with any of the following will not be permitted in the faith nursery:

- Runny nose (colored discharge)
- Head lice (child should be free from all nits)
- Inflamed mouth or throat
- Coughing/sneezing
- Chest congestion/labored breathing
- Diarrhea/vomiting within the past 24 hours
- Fever within the past 48 hours
- Listlessness/unusual fatigue or irritability/excessive crying
- Open sores
- Contagious disease (such as chicken pox/pink eye)

If your child is taking any antibiotics, he/she should have received treatment for at least 24 hours before coming to nursery care.

To prevent accidental overdoses, our nursery policy prohibits volunteers from administering any medications. General first aid, such as applying bandages to minor scrapes or diaper rash cream is permitted.

If a parent or child has had a fever within 48 hours, they are contagious and should not be in the nursery. If you believe that your child may be sick or is getting sick, please do not bring them for mass-time nursery care. (Volunteers follow this same guideline and will get a substitute if they are ill.)

Inconsolable Children: Nursery volunteers make every effort to engage unhappy children. If a child is inconsolable after 10 minutes, volunteers may choose to get you from mass or call you.

Inconsolable Children:

Nursery volunteers should make every effort to engage unhappy children. If a volunteer feels that a child is inconsolable, they may choose to get the parent from mass or call their cell phone. Try these efforts to console the child as age appropriate:

- Check and change diaper if needed
- Offer baby a bottle
- Swaddle and rock baby
- Distract child with a toy/book
- Attempt to interact child with others
- Ask another volunteer for assistance

Discipline:

The safety of children must be maintained at all times. No throwing, biting, hitting, kicking or foul language will be used. If a child expresses this behavior, remind them to follow the nursery rules. Use of time-out is permitted using the rule of one minute per year of age of the child. If all attempts fail, parents must be contacted.

Use of physical force or yelling should *never* be used. (Parents who are volunteering should reframe from spanking their child while on duty.)

Sign-In & Out Policy:

- Every child must be signed in by a parent upon entering the nursery. No children will be allowed to stay at the nursery unless they have a registration form on file or fill out a visitor's card.
- If a child has special needs, be sure that they are addressed when dropped off and signed in.
- Do not permit a sick child to attend Beloved Bunch that day.
- All diaper bags and personal items must be marked with their name and given directly to nursery volunteers.
- Children will not be released to anyone not listed on their registration form. Older siblings are not allowed to pick up children.

Emergency Plans:

If a child is experiencing a medical emergency, at least one volunteer will stay with the child while another goes directly to the church to locate a parent. If a volunteer cannot locate the child, he or she will call the listed cell phone number. If the parent does not answer, the volunteer will get the ushers help to find the parent and if necessary go up to Father Tom to announce that the parent is needed immediately.

In case of a tornado warning, gather children in the interior rooms away from all windows and possible flying objects. Be sure they cover their heads. If a parent comes to pick up their child, release them immediately.

In case of a fire, take the sign in sheet and have all children quickly assemble and walk outside. Take them around the sidewalk and to the parking lot at a safe distance. Take attendance and have one volunteer go into church to notify parents immediately.

First Aid:

A first aid kit will be available in the nursery. Adult volunteers are allowed to administer bandages for minor injuries only. All other injuries should be reported immediately to the parent (and 911 called when necessary). Volunteers must contact Kristina Vogt to make an incident report after the nursery closes for that mass time.

Opening Procedure:

- Volunteers should arrive 30 minutes prior to the mass time for which the nursery will be open. One volunteer leader will have a key, or code, or a parish staff person will ensure that the doors to the space are unlocked.
- One volunteer should be at the door to monitor sign-ins and visitor cards, if needed.
- Ensure that all needed supplies are out for the day.
- Check that the premises is safe (proper doors locked, outlet covers, etc.)
- Be sure to greet all children and guide them to the correct room.

Closing Procedure:

- Be sure children are only released to the parent who dropped them off or an adult listed on their registration form.
- Put away all supplies used for the day.
- Wipe down/sanitize all supplies (changing bed, rockers, etc.)
- Empty all trash cans into one bag and have one volunteer take it to the closest campus dumpster. Replace new bags.
- Check that bathroom is clean (add toilet paper as needed)
- Make any needed notes for Kristina on the back of that day's sign-in/out sheet.

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