



91 N. Park Street  
Dahlonega, GA 30533  
[www.stluckercc.org](http://www.stluckercc.org)

## Parish Family Formation

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## Adults / Children / Families

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**Sundays, 9:15 – 10:30 a.m.**

**2026- 2027  
POLICIES  
&  
INFORMATION**



Dear Parish Family of St. Luke the Evangelist,

Our Lord was born into a human family, and there he received his formation in the virtues. Thinking about this reality can fill us with many good resolutions. Your home is a domestic church, and each of us is called to become saints. Your responsibility as parents is to see that you as well as your children are formed in the virtues and teachings of the Catholic Church. The clergy and lay instructors never replace your role, nor relieve you of this high calling you have received. Parents must oversee the entire family's spiritual growth in the area of faith and morals.

Frequent reception of the sacraments at Sunday Mass (and daily Mass where possible) and frequent confession are cornerstones of a healthy spiritual life. Along with daily prayer and reading Sacred Scripture, they keep our interior life going. These practices show with our actions where our hearts lie - in the passing things of this world, or in the God who loves us, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Pope St. John Paul II remarked that an image that stood out in his youth was getting up in the middle of the night and seeing his father on his knees praying (his mother had died years before). The saint said that experience of his youth was his first seminary. Once again, my dear parents, God's plan is that you take care very well of the faith of your family. The one thing necessary is making disciples of Christ. Let's give our next generation of Catholics the tools necessary to love, know and defend their faith and become saints.

Sincerely,  
Fr. Matt

## “Form To Send”

The Archdiocese of Atlanta has begun a multi-year initiative called “Form to Send: Creating a Path for Missionary Discipleship.” This initiative will help us reorient our evangelization and faith formation efforts around engaging families (parents and children) and adult discipleship formation, with lifelong missionary discipleship as our long-term formation goal. There are three key objectives in this initiative:

- Creating a culture of family faith formation
- Re-envisioning youth ministry apart from sacramental preparation
- Creating a family-oriented Confirmation preparation approach while lowering the age of reception of this sacrament from 10<sup>th</sup> grade to 6<sup>th</sup> grade

Archbishop Hartmayer has given each parish the freedom to implement these objectives by the year 2031 in light of the culture and needs of each individual parish.

St. Luke’s is committed to building upon the solid catechetical foundation that has been established here at our parish with a view to improving, placing the focus of our catechetical efforts around adult and family catechesis.

## Adult Faith Formation

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

In *Catechesi Tradendae*, Pope St. John Paul II remarks that adult catechesis is “the principal form of catechesis, because it is addressed to persons who have the greatest responsibilities and the capacity to live the Christian message in its full developed form” (No. 43).

The purpose of our program is to empower adults to learn and to live their Catholic Christian Faith so that they are equipped to live out the vocation that they have been called to, whether that is as a spouse and parent or a single person or grandparent.

In addition to monthly Sunday morning sessions that are required for parents to attend, throughout the school year, our adults meet weekly in the parish hall for further formation opportunities. Also St. Luke’s offers a variety of adult Bible and book studies for men and women at different times throughout the week, as well as monthly dinner and doctrine events on the first Wednesday of each month during the school year.

## Family Faith Formation

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “Through the grace of the sacrament of marriage, parents receive the responsibility<sup>1</sup> and privilege of *evangelizing their children* (2225).” It is the mission and purpose of the Parish Family Formation program to serve the parishioners of St. Luke by assisting and empowering parents in carrying out this awesome responsibility. **The work of the staff and volunteers of St. Luke’s Parish Family Formation is to assist you, not replace you.**

## Policies for PK – 12<sup>th</sup> Grades

### **MASS ATTENDANCE & FAMILY PRAYER**

Mass attendance is the essential and central part of passing on the faith. **St. Luke’s Parish Family Formation complements, but does not replace, your children’s participation at the Sunday liturgy with their family.** Praying and worshipping together as a family will serve well to solidify what is taught in our Sunday classes. We encourage and support your commitment to make sure your children attend Mass as well as classes and Wednesday night programs. Discuss with your

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<sup>1</sup> All faith formation offered at the parish is grounded in the Catholic faith; without it, the parish is unable to achieve its mission. All catechists, other volunteers, and parents or legal guardians are therefore expected to demonstrate support for the parish’s mission by respecting the teachings of the Catholic faith and not contradicting or criticizing them publicly, in words or actions, including through online social media venues.

It is important to understand that over the course of the parish’s faith formation program, all participants and volunteers are exposed to teachings that include the Catholic Church’s understanding of marriage as a union exclusively between a man and a woman, that sexual relationships outside of marriage are contrary to Catholic Church teaching, and that sexual identity is grounded in being created as male or female in the image of God. While St. Luke the Evangelist is committed to ensuring that all tenets of the Catholic faith are shared and discussed with respect, compassion, and sensitivity, especially with those who may struggle with them, the parish expects all catechists and parents/guardians to demonstrate support for these and all the teachings of the Roman Catholic faith in a manner consistent with the obligations they freely enter into when they volunteer or enroll.

family how you will schedule attending Sunday Mass as a family, as well as faithfully attend classes and Wednesday night programs.

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### STUDENT CELL PHONES

Our classes are taught without cell phones. If cell phones are brought to class, students will put them in a common area and will pick them up when they leave the class. *It is best that students do not bring phones to class.*

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### FEES

Fees collected for classes are for materials and supplies and do not include a Confirmation retreat fee. This fee will be collected separately by the youth minister. Scholarships and payment plans are available. To request either of these payment options, please contact Kelley Pepper.

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### HOME STUDY

The Archdiocese of Atlanta allows for religious education to occur in a Catholic school, a parish family formation program, or a home school. If you are interested in more information regarding the home school option, just ask Kelley.

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### STUDENT ARRIVAL

**Children Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade must be escorted to their classrooms by a parent or guardian.** Parents are encouraged to escort their children from 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, but it is not required. **Students MUST be in class and seated by 9:15 a.m. each Sunday.** Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class and turned into the office at that time. In addition to the disruptive nature of late arrivals, children arriving late may not be recorded as present.

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### STUDENT DISMISSAL

**To ensure the safety of our children, we must require that a parent/guardian of children Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade park their cars and come into the building to pick up their children. No Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade child will be permitted to leave the building without an adult.** Classes end at 10:30 a.m. Please be here on time to pick up your child so the catechists can attend Mass.

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### STUDENT CONDUCT

Life as a Christian is a commitment to live by the example of Jesus Christ. This commitment includes each student's acceptance of responsibility for his or her conduct and actions, and each student's commitment to respect the rights of others. Students are expected to: (1) attend class regularly; (2) participate in activities and discussion; (3) respect their teachers; and (4) respect each other.

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### DISCIPLINE

Normal discipline problems will be handled by the catechist. If a problem becomes persistent, the student will be sent to the director. A continuing problem may necessitate a call to parents or a request that a parent attend class with the child or face removal from the program. Disciplinary infractions include, but are not limited to: abusive language, fighting, vandalism, disrespect to the teacher or other students, stealing, or leaving the building.

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### DRESS

Sunday dress is to be expected. Males or females dressed immodestly will not be tolerated. Violation or infraction may result in your child being pulled from the class or from the sacramental occasion.

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### WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, classes may be canceled. If we need to cancel classes, a group text and/or email will be sent to all enrolled families. Also, if in doubt, check the parish website at [www.stlukercc.org](http://www.stlukercc.org).

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### ATTENDANCE

Please make every effort to have your child attend class unless there are exceptional circumstances. In order to maintain enrollment for your child, the following attendance requirements must be met:

1. *Your child may not have more than 5 unexcused absences or he/she will be considered withdrawn from the program*
  2. *Your child must attend a minimum of 75% of scheduled classes to receive credit for the year.*
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# **Curriculums**

## ➤ **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (Pre-K and Kindergarten)**

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a program based on the belief that young children already have a relationship with God by virtue of their Baptism. The Holy Spirit works through the catechists to nurture this love of God in these children. Catechists utilize the Montessori method to present Scripture and the sacraments to children. Through wondering questions and hands-on material, the children dive deep into the meanings of the Scriptures and prayers. They can repeat these presentations on their own during their work time in a specially prepared environment called an atrium. Check out [www.cgsusa.org](http://www.cgsusa.org).

## ➤ **Word of Life (1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade)**

This catechetical program is a collaboration between the Augustine Institute and Ignatius Press. In an effort to help children, teachers, parents, and families discover their authentic Catholic identity and to reinvigorate fruitful participation in the Church's life and mission, Word of Life utilizes what they call Four Golden Catechetical Threads:

1. Salvation History: Revealing God's presence and plan throughout history and our place in that plan.
2. Christian Anthropology: The true human story that answers the questions about our real identity, why we are here, and who are we called to be.
3. Heroic Virtue & Character Formation: By cooperating with God's grace and the supernatural virtues, we find our true dignity and purpose and are able to live with heroic virtue and character.
4. Learning Through Discipleship: Catechesis that shows why the faith matters and nurtures a deepening integration of the faith in daily life through Christian discipleship.

This curriculum not only provides faithful teaching but also equips students to be able to explain why the faith is relevant in our modern culture. Check out [www.wordoflifefseries.org](http://www.wordoflifefseries.org).

## **Confirmation Preparation**

Our 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> graders will be meeting on Sundays from 9:15-10:30 a.m. for their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation this spring. In light of the Form to Send Initiative (see p. 3), 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders who have satisfied the 2-year foundational preparation requirement will be receiving this sacrament in the spring of 2027. The hope is that teens encounter and grow in relationship with Christ, deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, and go forth and share the Good News.

## **Already Confirmed?? . . . Join us for the Ablaze Café!**

For high school teens who have already received the Sacrament of Confirmation, we are offering a special opportunity just for them! They will meet at the same time on Sundays, and they will be provided opportunities to encounter and build their relationship with the Lord, as well as grow in learning and sharing the faith.

## **Middle School Youth Group**

All middle school youth (6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade) are invited to join us at youth group! The group meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of the month at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall and is an opportunity to be able to come together with other youth of the parish to grow and deepen in faith and relationship with Christ. Please contact Victoria Thompson, our youth minister, with any questions you may have and/or to be added to the youth group communication to receive updates and reminders.

## **St. Luke Teen Disciples**

All high school teens (9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade) are invited to join us at our high school program, St. Luke Teen Disciples! Join us on Wednesdays after the 6 p.m. Mass in the Admin. Building for dinner and to join other teens in being disciples of Christ. Parents – please contact Victoria Thompson, our youth minister, with any questions you may have.

# Sacraments

## FIRST PENANCE & FIRST COMMUNION

*Preparation for these Sacraments is a 2-year cycle, typically beginning in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade, with First Communion to be received at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade year.* Preparation will be during the regular 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Parish Family Formation Classes at St. Luke's. There is a 21 class minimum attendance requirement for the required prior year (typically the 1<sup>st</sup> grade year). Also, Baptism is needed at least 3 months prior to the reception of First Penance. Parents will attend *four* special sessions for these Sacraments. **Attendance at these Parents' Meetings is mandatory if your child will be receiving these sacraments during this school year.**

Meeting #1: Sunday, Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> 9:15 – 10:30 a.m.

Meeting #2: Sunday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> 9:15 – 10:30 a.m.

Meeting #3: Sunday, Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> 9:15 – 10:30 a.m.

Meeting #4: Sunday, March 14<sup>th</sup> 9:15 – 10:30 a.m.

\* **Sun., Jan. 24, 2027 at 9:45 a.m.: First Penance**

\* **Thurs., April 29, 2027 at 6 p.m.: First Communion Rehearsal**

\* **Sat., May 1, 2027 at 10 a.m.: First Communion Mass**

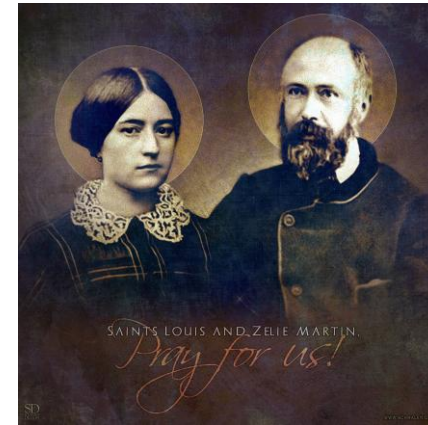
Please direct any inquiries or concerns to Kelley Peffer at [kpeffer@stlukercc.org](mailto:kpeffer@stlukercc.org) or (706) 864-4779, ext. 7004.

## CONFIRMATION

*Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation requires attendance in a Catholic school, a parish religious education program, or a home school religious education program for at least 2 YEARS prior to reception of the sacrament.*

*In the Archdiocese of Atlanta the age of reception of the Sacrament is being moved down from 10<sup>th</sup> grade to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This is to be done by 2031 in all parishes in the Archdiocese. At St. Luke's, we are gradually moving the grade down, one grade per year. For this school year, the Sacrament of Confirmation will be received by those 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders who have met the 2-year requirement.*

If you have any questions, please contact Victoria Thompson, our youth minister, at [vthompson@stlukercc.org](mailto:vthompson@stlukercc.org) or (706) 864-4779, ext. 7002.



## Sts. Louis & Zélie Martin

Patron saints of St. Luke's Parish Family Formation  
Parents of St. Thérèse of Lisieux  
Born in France / D. 1877 (Zélie) and 1894 (Louis)  
Feast day: July 12

Louis and Zélie Martin are the second couple in the history of the Church to be canonized. Louis Martin was born in Bordeaux in 1823, and Marie Azelia (Zélie) Guerin was born in Alençon in 1831. They had both discerned religious life but eventually determined that they were called to marriage.

After marrying on July 13, 1858, the couple lived for almost a year without marital intimacy but changed their minds when a confessor encouraged them to reconsider. They then decided to have as many children as God desired for them. The Martins had a warm and loving home. They cared for their children, the poor, and the sick. During the Franco-Prussian war, they were forced to billet nine German soldiers, but they received this humiliation with peace and treated the soldiers with charity.

One of their children, Léonie, had a difficult temperament as a child, screaming sometimes for hours until she received what she wanted. She was even expelled from school because she was so unmanageable. It was only through heroic patience and tact that the parents (especially Zélie) were able to win over the heart of the girl. Léonie eventually discovered her own calling to be a Visitation nun. She lived to an old age and was known especially for her humility and gentleness of spirit.



Louis and Zélie had to confront many of the challenges that families face today. They worked hard in small businesses (Louis was a watchmaker and Zélie an expert lace maker) while raising a large family. They had to care for a fractious child in the midst of her tantrums. They took responsibility for their elderly parents. They struggled to find time to pray and take part in parish activities. They grieved the loss of 4 of their 9 children. And they had to endure painful diseases, including Zélie's breast cancer, which led to her premature death, and Louis' humiliating experience of mental illness and forced confinement in a psychiatric hospital.

After Zélie's death, Louis' daughters left home, one by one, to enter religious life. Despite his loneliness, he said, "It is a great, great honor for me that the Good Lord desires to take all of my children. If I had anything better, I would not hesitate to offer it to him."

It is sometimes said that Louis and Zélie were canonized because of St. Thérèse. In a sense, the case is exactly the opposite: Thérèse became a saint largely because of her parents. The Martins created a home that fostered holiness and nurtured vocations. The parents became saints because they corresponded to the grace that God gave them, through their sacramental marriage, to follow him heroically and to help their children do the same. As St. Thérèse herself wrote, "God gave me a father and mother who were more worthy of heaven than of earth."

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*Loving Father, you called Louis and Zélie Martin to follow you closely in the state of matrimony. Through the example of their individual lives and the pattern of their family life, and through their intercession from heaven, may our family also be a Christian oasis of love, peace, and joy. Help us to foster an atmosphere in which our children can freely discern and respond courageously to the vocation that you have chosen for them. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.*

(Taken from *Forming Families: Forming Saints* by Fr. Carter Griffin, pp. 207-208.)

## Helpful Resources

- Formed – online a digital streaming platform providing Catholic movies, audio talks, e-books, and study programs [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org)
- Catholic Answers – media ministry that answers questions about what the Church really teaches [www.catholic.com](http://www.catholic.com)
- CatholicHÔM (Catholic Households on Mission) - an online app and community platform founded by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak to help families live out their faith at home. It provides digital tools, expert coaching, and resources based on Catholic teachings and psychology [www.catholicom.com](http://www.catholicom.com)
- Messy Family Project - a Catholic ministry founded by Mike and Alicia Hernon to help parents embrace the chaos of family life, featuring tools like podcasts, courses, and family board meeting guides [www.messyfamilyproject.org](http://www.messyfamilyproject.org)
- Family Honor Inc. – creates programs designed to help parents talk to their children about sexuality, virtue, and human dignity from a Catholic perspective [www.familyhonor.org](http://www.familyhonor.org)
- The Person and Identity Project – assists the Catholic Church in promoting the Catholic vision of the human person and responding to the challenges of gender ideology <https://personandidentity.com/>
- LifeTeen - a Catholic, Eucharist-centered movement designed to lead teenagers and their families into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church [www.lifeteen.com](http://www.lifeteen.com)
- EWTN (the Eternal Word Television Network) - the world's largest religious media network located in Irondale, Alabama, providing 24/7 Catholic television, radio, and news broadcasting. Founded in 1981 by Mother Angelica [www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com)
- Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament – a Catholic Shrine in Hanceville, Alabama, founded by Mother Angelica and is home to the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration who live a hidden life consecrated to God [www.olamshrine.com](http://www.olamshrine.com)