



St Joseph Parish Faith Formation

**2020-21**  
**FAMILY HANDBOOK**

*Middle School Edition*

6180 E. Willow Street  
Long Beach, CA 90815  
(562) 598-0519  
[www.stjosephlb.org](http://www.stjosephlb.org)

# W e l c o m e

Dear Families:

The Faith Formation Staff of St. Joseph Parish welcomes you to our Children Faith Formation Programs. We are very pleased to have your children registered in our program, and we look forward to working closely with you and your children during this year. To serve with love - our faith formation programs live out our goals to welcome, provide spiritual nourishment, foster peace and justice, and encourage service to others.

Our mission is to deepen the students' relationship with our loving, just and merciful God, to increase their knowledge of Faith and Church, to enrich their prayer practices and provide opportunities to serve the community. This is done primarily through classes, taught by Catechists, who are assisted by aides and parent volunteers. As your partners in the religious formation of your children, we strive to provide a welcoming, loving environment in which we can supplement what you are already teaching by your example.

It is our desire to assist you in the spiritual, as well as the educational growth of your child, and ultimately your entire family. It is through prayer and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church that we can grow together and ensure that our children learn what it is to know and live the gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Although this year will offer challenges we have not yet faced for teaching Faith Formation to the Parish children, we are excited to work with families to bring Jesus to our children. This year you will hear more about the domestic church (the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ) and how this can grow ever stronger in your own home!

We look forward to getting to know you better and we invite you to be an active participant in our faith formation programs as well as in the St. Joseph Catholic Community. We hope this "Parent Handbook" helps you become familiar with our program. **Please Read it carefully** and call me anytime regarding your child's Faith Formation. On behalf of St. Joseph Parish, it is our pleasure to serve the families of our Parish.

Yours in Christ,

St. Joseph Parish Faith Formation Team

## FAITH FORMATION COVID-19 Plan

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles is requiring distance learning formats for the beginning of the new faith formation year and at least until federal, state, county and local officials approve in person instruction. Here at St. Joseph, we have made plans to provide engaging and lessons in a distance learning format using Zoom, Kahoot! and Google Forms. We will continue to assess our format during the year and transition to in-person classes when it is safe to do so.

### Families will have two options for Faith Formation in 2020-2021

**The first option (default) allows children to return to in person instruction when approved.** Please note: classes meeting at St. Joseph will adhere to the most current CDC guidelines.

**The second option is an "at home only" model.** All lessons are taught by parents at home **with the support and guidance of Director of Faith Formation and catechists.** Email Joe Voigt @ [joe@stjosephlb.org](mailto:joe@stjosephlb.org) to select this option.



### IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Office ~ (562) 598-0519 Fax ~ (562) 431-7424

**Faith Formation Director:** Joe Voigt

**Faith Formation Assistant:** Michelle Johnson

**High School Confirmation & Youth Ministry:** Marc Leon

**RCIA & Adult Confirmation:** (562) 594-4657

### Faith Formation Office Hours

*Office will be closed all Parish Holidays*

Monday-Thursday **9am-1pm**

Friday-Saturday: **Closed**

**Email:** [religioused@stjosephlb.org](mailto:religioused@stjosephlb.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/stjosephlbre](http://www.facebook.com/stjosephlbre)

**Website:** [www.stjosephlb.org](http://www.stjosephlb.org)



# FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM POLICIES

**SAFEGAURD THE CHILDREN:** The Archdiocese of Los Angeles is committed to compliance with the U.S. Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. Article 12 of the Charter mandates that, "each diocese establish and maintain a Safe Environment Program for children and youth." In light of this, the - VIRTUS Empowering God's Children (EGC)- was adopted by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in September, 2006. This program was implemented beginning January 2007, in parish Religious Education programs.

The children in St. Joseph Parish Faith Formation Programs grades K-12 will participate in these lessons during the 2020-21 program year. Check the program schedule for the date and time of your child(ren)'s training. Parent and guardians have an opportunity to review the program and materials at our Parent Commitment meeting.

All staff members, volunteers, and occasional helpers/chaperones whose duties require direct contact and supervision of young persons shall sign an agreement to follow the Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Young Persons at Parish Activities or Events (hereafter called Guidelines). Staff members, volunteers, and occasional helpers/chaperones may not interact with young persons on behalf of the parish until this agreement is signed.

All staff members and volunteers whose duties require direct contact and supervision of young persons shall complete the VIRTUS training, *Protecting God's Children*, within four (4) months of beginning their ministry. Staff members and volunteers who have not yet completed this training may interact with young persons on behalf of the parish only if a VIRTUS trained adult staff member or volunteer is present. The ratio of untrained to trained staff members/volunteers shall not exceed 2 to 1 in any group setting.

**COMMUNICATION:** Each registered student will receive a weekly email with class assignments and links to additional materials. Please read all information. Always ask your children if they were given any papers that you need to read. From time to time we will also send email reminders or updates. Please make sure your email address is current with the faith formation office.

**VOLUNTEERS:** All your children's teachers are volunteers. Please keep them in your prayers and treat them as the precious gifts that they are to your Parish. We always need more aides in the classrooms. If you want to help, please call our Faith Formation Office.

## BEHAVIOR:

1. Students should enter classrooms only if the volunteer Catechist is in the assigned classroom.
2. Students are expected to model their behavior after Jesus Christ who instituted two Great Commandments: "You shall love the Lord Your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all you strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 11:27).
3. No food, drink or chewing gum inside the classroom unless it is an organized event by the catechist or Director of Faith Formation.
4. No electronic devices (iPods, iPads, MP3 Players, video games, etc). Cell phones must be turned off and put away.
5. Behavior or language that intimidates, belittles, harasses (including harassment of a sexual nature) makes inappropriate references or physically harms oneself or others will result in disciplinary action . **We have a Zero Tolerance Bullying Policy.**
6. The Faith Formation program meets in the school classrooms, therefore going inside students desks is inappropriate. Each classroom has its own supply bin.
7. The following are some guidelines for behavior based upon these simple principles:

*A. Students properly respect and obey adults in authority.*

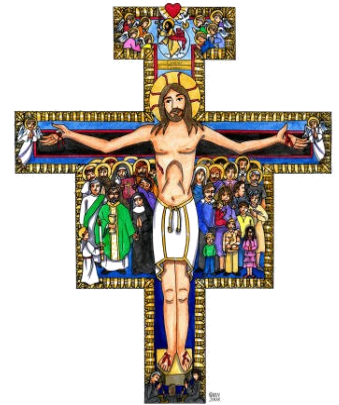
*B. Students properly respect the personal space and personal property of others.*

**DISCIPLINE:** In the event a student engages in inappropriate behavior any or all of the following may occur:

1. Parental notification of infraction.
2. Meeting between parents and Catechist and Director of Faith Formation.
3. Parent attendance required at subsequent program classes.
4. Temporary removal of student from Religious Education program.
5. Permanent removal of student from Religious Education program.

The Director of Faith Formation is responsible for ensuring that all sanctions against students are implemented in a fair and consistent manner by the faith formation catechists and staff.

**ACCIDENTS:** If a child is injured, a First Aid certified staff member or teacher will immediately attend to the student, administering first aid as needed and parents will be notified. If the injuries or condition of the student appears to be even remotely serious, 911 will be immediately called and parents will be notified.





# Faith Formation Program (Grades 6-8) Tuesdays (7-8pm)

## EMPOWERING GOD'S CHILDREN:

The job of ensuring children's safety is a challenging undertaking. The prevention of child sexual abuse requires we give our children the tools they need to overcome the advances of someone who intends to do them harm. The *Empowering God's Children* program (EGC) is designed to assist parents and teachers in this important task. Your student will receive year 1 of this training on: **October 13, 2020 @ 7pm on Zoom.**

## FAMILY ATTENDANCE AT SUNDAY MASS:

Parents have the responsibility of sharing their faith with their children and to bring them to Mass every Sunday in order to show them the importance of having God in their lives. Coming together as a family to Mass every Sunday is a faith obligation for all Catholic families. We are requiring each faith formation family to participate in mass either in person (currently the Sunday 8:30am Mass on Grass or via our online mass <https://www.youtube.com/c/StJosephLongBeach>. A Faith at Home sheet will be provided each week.

## CLASS ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES:

It is very important that your child attends class or complete assignments every week. **For online learning, assignments are due by 10pm on the Monday after they have been assigned.**

Sacrament Prep Students are allowed only FIVE (5) absences. If more than 5 classes/assignments are missed, the year will not count towards sacramental preparation. Please inform the RE office of any prolonged absence.

If a child leaves the school without permission, the parents/guardians will be contacted and the police may be notified.

**VISITORS:** We enjoy visitors in the classroom. However, in the interest of safety during possible catastrophes or emergencies, we NEED TO KNOW IN ADVANCE! A "minor" (in age) friend of your son or daughter must bring a parent's note with an emergency phone number. We take responsibility for every student in the program.

## ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL:

Children should arrive no more than 10 minutes before class begins. No child should enter the classroom unless the teacher is present. No students will be allowed in after 7:05pm. Parents must sign their child into their classroom. NO DROP-OFFS. **FOR PICK UP PARENTS MUST PARK and sign out their child from the PLC/St. Joseph Room. NO EXCEPTIONS!**

## September 2020

29 Parent Orientation—Zoom

## October 2020

06 Youth Night—Zoom  
13 Empowering God's Children (EGC) - Zoom (7-8pm)  
20 Youth Night—Zoom  
27 Where I see God Activity

## November 2020

03 Youth Night—Zoom  
10 Class—Zoom  
17 Youth Night—Zoom  
24 **NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)**

## December 2020

01 Youth Night  
08 Class  
15 **NO CLASS - (Advent Penance Service)**  
22 **NO CLASS - (Christmas Holiday)**  
29 **NO CLASS - (New Years Holiday)**

## January 2021

05 Youth Night  
12 Class  
19 Youth Night  
26 Class

## February 2021

02 Youth Night  
09 Class  
16 Youth Night— Marti Gras  
23 Class

## March 2021

02 Youth Night  
09 Class  
16 Youth Night— Marti Gras  
23 **NO CLASS - (Lenten Penance Service)**  
30 Pizza and the Pastor

## April 2021

06 **NO CLASS - (Easter)**  
13 **NO CLASS - (Easter)**  
20 Youth Night  
27 Last Class