

# ST. JOSEPH



**2024-2025**

## **SUNDAY FAITH FORMATION HANDBOOK**

6180 E. WILLOW STREET, LONG BEACH, CA 90815

# Welcome

Dear Families:

The Faith Formation Staff of St. Joseph Parish warmly welcomes you to our Faith Formation Programs. We are delighted to have your children enrolled and eagerly anticipate working closely with you and your family throughout the year. Our programs are dedicated to serving with love by fostering spiritual nourishment, peace, justice, and a commitment to service.

Our mission is to deepen the students' relationship with our loving, just, and merciful God, enhance their knowledge of Faith and Church, enrich their prayer practices, and provide opportunities for community service. This mission is primarily achieved through classes taught by Catechists, supported by aides and parent volunteers. As partners in your children's religious education, we strive to create a welcoming and loving environment that complements the values you instill at home.

We aim to support your child's spiritual and educational growth, ultimately benefiting your entire family. Through prayer and active participation in the Church's sacramental life, we can grow together and ensure our children understand and live the gospel message of Jesus Christ.

We are excited to collaborate with families to bring Jesus into our children's lives. You will learn more about the domestic church (the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ) and how to strengthen it within your own home.

We look forward to getting to know you better and encourage your active participation in our Faith Formation programs and the St. Joseph Catholic Community. We hope this "Parent Handbook" helps you familiarize yourself with our program. Please read it carefully and feel free to contact me anytime regarding your child's Faith Formation. On behalf of St. Joseph Parish, it is our pleasure to welcome you to the Faith Formation Program.

Yours in Christ,  
St. Joseph Parish Faith Formation Team



## Blessing of the Children.

13 Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked them,

14 but Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

15 After he placed his hands on them, he went away.

-Matthew 19:13-15

# FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM POLICIES

**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, and a requirement of our faith formation program.

**CLASS ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES:** It is very important that your child attends class every week. If a child arrives later than 10 minutes after the class start time for Elementary and Jr. High Faith Formation Programs, he/she will be considered absent.

Sacrament Prep Students are allowed only Four (4) absences. If more than 4 classes/assignments are missed, the year will not count towards sacramental preparation. Please inform the RE office of any prolonged absence. We are always here to help. For Confirmation students, please refer to the Confirmation Parent Handbook.

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

If a child needs to be dismissed early, the parent should write a note to the teacher indicating the time of release. Parent or parent designee, will pick up and sign the child out of the designated time.

**COMMUNICATION:** Each registered student will receive a weekly email. 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 our Parish. We always need more aides in the classrooms. If you want to help, please call our Faith Formation Office.

**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.

## **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 your 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. 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 of 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.



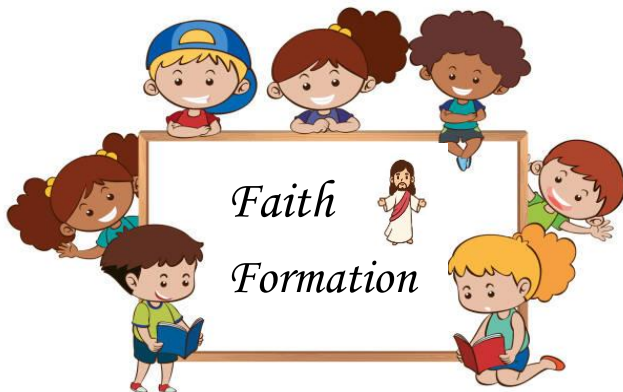
# Elementary Faith Formation Program Sundays

## Sacrament Prep 1 and Continuing Education (10-11:15am)

**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 this training on: **January 26, 2025 @10:15-11:15am via zoom.**

**CLASS ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES:** It is very important that your child attends class/turns in assignments every week. If a child arrives later than 10 minutes after the class start time, he/she will be considered absent. **Students are allowed only FOUR (4) absences during Sacramental Preparation years.** If more than 4 classes are missed, the year will not count towards sacramental preparation. Please inform the Faith Formation Office of any prolonged absence. We are always here to help. See page 3 for our policies on leaving without permission or early dismissal.

**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 10:10am. Children must be **WALKED** to their designated classroom in the St. Joseph School Buildings. Parents must sign their child into their classroom. **NO DROP-OFFS. FOR PICK UP, PARENTS MUST PARK** and sign out their child from the designated classroom... **NO EXCEPTIONS!**



### September 2024:

- 8 Parent Orientation
- 15 1<sup>st</sup> CLASS
- 22 CLASS
- 29 CLASS

30 Parent Formation Night 7 pm-8 pm held in the church

### October 2024:

- 6 CLASS
- 13 CLASS
- 20 CLASS
- 27 CLASS

### November 2024:

- 3 CLASS
- 10 CLASS
- 17 CLASS

18 Parent Formation Night 7 pm-8 pm held in the church

24 **NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING Break**

### December 2024:

- 1 **NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING Break**
- 8 CLASS
- 15 CLASS – Las Posadas Family Celebration
- 22 **NO CLASS – CHRISTMAS Break**
- 29 **NO CLASS – CHRISTMAS Break**

### January 2025:

- 5 CLASS
- 12 CLASS
- 19 **NO CLASS – MLK**
- 26 Empowering God's Children (EGC) Zoom
- 27 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation Parent Retreat 7 pm-8 pm in the church

### February 2025:

- 2 CLASS
- 9 CLASS
- 16 **NO CLASS – ASH WEDNESDAY**
- 23 **NO CLASS – Presidents' Weekend / 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent**

### March 2025:

- 2 CLASS
- 9 CLASS
- 16 CLASS
- 23 CLASS
- 30 **NO CLASS – 1<sup>ST</sup> COMMUNION RETREAT**

### April 2025:

- 6 **NO CLASS – Parish Fair Weekend**
- 13 CLASS
- 14 Parent Formation Night 7 pm-8 pm held in the church
- 20 **NO CLASS – EASTER SUNDAY**
- 27 CLASS

### May 2025:

- 4 LAST CLASS
- 17 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion (Sacrament Prep 2 ONLY)
- 18 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion (Sacrament Prep 2 ONLY)

# Elementary Faith Formation Program Sundays

## Sacrament Prep Year 2 (10-11:15am)

**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 this training on: **January 26, 2025 @10:15-11:15am via zoom.**

**PARENT SACRAMENT PREP 2 FORMATION:** We will offer three Sacrament Prep 2 Parent Only sessions from 7-8pm located in the church.

**SACRAMENT PREP 2 RETREATS:** We will offer two Sacrament Prep 2 retreats for parents and candidates:

Reconciliation Retreat:  
January 27, 2025

First Communion Retreat:  
Sunday, March 30, 2025: 2:00-3:30pm

**SACRAMENTS:**

First Reconciliation:  
Saturday, February 8, 2025: 9:00-11:00am

First Communion:  
Saturday, May 17, 2024: 10am & 5pm Mass  
Sunday, May 18, 2024:  
8:30am, 10:30am & 12:30pm Mass

**CLASS ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES:** It is very important that your child attends class/turns in assignments every week. If a child arrives later than 10 minutes after the class start time, he/she will be considered absent. **Students are allowed only FOUR (4) absences during Sacramental Preparation years.** If more than 4 classes are missed, the year will not count towards sacramental preparation. Please inform the Faith Formation Office of any prolonged absence. We are always here to help. See page 3 for our policies on leaving without permission or early dismissal.

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**October 2024:**

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13 CLASS  
20 CLASS  
27 CLASS

**November 2024:**

3 CLASS  
10 CLASS  
17 CLASS

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24 NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING Break

**December 2024:**

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8 CLASS  
15 CLASS – Las Posadas Family Celebration  
22 NO CLASS – CHRISTMAS Break  
29 NO CLASS – CHRISTMAS Break

**January 2025:**

5 CLASS  
12 CLASS  
19 NO CLASS – MLK  
26 Empowering God’s Children (EGC) Zoom  
27 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation Parent Retreat 7 pm-8 pm in the church

**February 2025:**

2 CLASS  
8 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation Service  
9 CLASS  
16 NO CLASS – ASH WEDNESDAY  
23 NO CLASS – Presidents’ Weekend / 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent

**March 2025:**

2 CLASS  
9 CLASS  
16 CLASS  
23 CLASS  
30 NO CLASS – 1<sup>ST</sup> COMMUNION RETREAT

**April 2025:**

6 NO CLASS – Parish Fair Weekend  
13 CLASS  
14 Parent Formation Night 7 pm-8 pm held in the church  
20 NO CLASS – EASTER SUNDAY  
27 CLASS

**May 2025:**

4 LAST CLASS  
17 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion 10am & 5pm Mass  
18 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion 8:30am, 10:30am & 12:30pm Mass

# St. Joseph Parish Faith Formation



## SAFE GUARD THE CHILDREN

### Empowering God's 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 2023-2024 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.



## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office: (562) 598-0519

Faith Formation Director : Marc Leon

[marc@stjosephlb.org](mailto:marc@stjosephlb.org)

Faith Formation Assistant : Michelle Johnson

[michelle@stjosephlb.org](mailto:michelle@stjosephlb.org)

High School Confirmation & Youth Ministry : Liz Moreno

[liz@stjosephlb.org](mailto:liz@stjosephlb.org)

OCIA: Sr. Eva Bryan: [sreva@stjosephlb.org](mailto:sreva@stjosephlb.org)

## PRAYER REQUIREMENTS

### SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, And of the Son,  
And of the Holy Spirit

### HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of Grace!  
The Lord is with you;  
Blessed are you among women,  
And blessed is the fruit  
Of your womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary Mother of God,  
Pray for us sinners,  
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father,  
Who art in heaven,  
Hallowed by thy name;  
Thy kingdom come;  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
And forgive us our trespasses as  
we forgive those who trespass against us;  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. Amen

### GLORY BE

Glory be to the Father,  
And to the Son,  
And to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now,  
And ever shall be, world without end. Amen

### ACT OF CONTRITION

My God,  
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.  
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do  
good, I have sinned against you  
whom I should love above all things.  
I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance,  
to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads  
me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and  
died for us.  
In his name, my God, have mercy.

### Faith Formation Office Hours

*Office will be closed all Parish Holidays*

Monday-Thursday: 9am-3pm

Friday-Saturday: Closed

Website:

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

