

ST. JOSEPH



2025-2026

SUNDAY FAITH FORMATION HANDBOOK

6180 E. WILLOW STREET, LONG BEACH, CA 90815



Dear Families,

Welcome to Faith Formation at St. Joseph Parish! We're so glad your children are joining us this year, and we look forward to walking alongside your family on this journey of faith.

At the heart of our programs is a desire to serve with love—nurturing a deeper relationship with our loving and merciful God, promoting peace and justice, and encouraging lives of prayer and service. Through the dedication of our Catechists, aides, and parent volunteers, your children will grow in their understanding of the Catholic faith and experience what it means to live as disciples of Jesus.

We believe that Faith Formation is a partnership. As you continue to form your children at home, we hope to complement your efforts with engaging lessons, opportunities for service, and a welcoming environment rooted in the Gospel. Together, through prayer and participation in the life of the Church, we can help our children discover how to live out their faith with purpose and joy.

This year, you'll also explore ways to strengthen the “domestic church”—the sacred space of faith within your home. Our goal is to support your child's spiritual growth while enriching your whole family's connection to Christ and His Church.

Please take time to review the Parent Handbook to get familiar with our program. If you have any questions or need support, don't hesitate to reach out. It is truly a joy and blessing to welcome you into our Faith Formation family here at St. Joseph.

With joy in Christ,
The Faith Formation Team
St. Joseph Parish



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

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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 Year 1 (10-11:15am)

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 2025-2026 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.

September 2025:

7 Family Orientation Dinner in the SJC
14 CLASS
21 CLASS
28 CLASS

October 2025:

5 CLASS
12 CLASS
19 CLASS
26 CLASS

November 2025:

2 CLASS
9 CLASS Empowering God's Children
16 CLASS
23 NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING Break
30 NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING Break

December 2025:

7 CLASS
14 CLASS – Christmas Celebration
21 NO CLASS – CHRISTMAS Break
28 NO CLASS – CHRISTMAS Break

January 2026:

4 NO CLASS
11 CLASS
18 NO CLASS MLK
25 Empowering God's Children (EGC) Zoom
26 1st Reconciliation Parent Retreat 7 pm-8 pm in the church

February 2026:

1 CLASS
7 1st Reconciliation Service
8 CLASS
15 NO CLASS – Presidents' Weekend
22 NO CLASS – RE Congress Weekend / 1st Sunday of Lent

March 2026:

1 CLASS
8 CLASS
15 CLASS
22 CLASS
29 NO CLASS 1ST COM RETREAT Sac Prep 2 ONLY

April 2026:

5 NO CLASS – EASTER SUNDAY
12 CLASS
19 CLASS
26 CLASS

May 2026:

3 NO CLASS Parish Fair
9 1st COM REHEARSAL (TBD)
16 1st Holy Communion 10am & 5pm Mass
17 1st Holy Communion 8:30am, 10:30am & 12:30pm Mass

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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: **November 9th 2025 @10:00-11:15am**

PARENT/ Family Events: We will offer two family events (Not mandatory) A Halloween Trunk or Treat and A Family Lenten dinner/ Stations of the Cross

SACRAMENT PREP 2 RETREATS: We will offer two Sacrament Prep 2 retreats for parents and candidates:
Reconciliation Retreat:
January 26, 2026

First Communion Retreat:
Sunday, March 29, 2026: 2:00-3:30pm

SACRAMENTS:

First Reconciliation:
Saturday, February 7, 2026: 9:00-11:00am

First Communion:
Saturday, May 16, 2026: 10am & 5pm Mass
Sunday, May 17, 2026:
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.

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!**

Elementary Faith Formation Program Sundays

Sacrament Prep Year 1 & 2 Prayers

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

Sundays: Class

Website:

www.stjosephlb.org

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office: (562) 598-0519

Faith Formation Director: Marc Leon

marc@stjosephlb.org

Faith Formation Assistant: Michelle Johnson

michelle@stjosephlb.org

Confirmation Coordinator/Youth Ministry: Liz Moreno

liz@stjosephlb.org

OCIA/OCIC: Sr. Eva Bryan

sreva@stjosephlb.org

