



Faith Formation Parent Handbook
Program Year 2023/2024

Encounter Jesus, Be Disciples

5205 Upland Road
Camarillo, CA 93012

June 1, 2023

Dear Parish Formation Families,

Welcome and thank you for letting us team with you to help all of us grow in faith and deepen our relationship with God and with each other. It is an important priority to nurture a love of God that will serve as a foundation for a lifetime for our children. Our main role in the spiritual growth of our children is in living the Christian message of love - day after day - before the eyes, ears and impressionable minds of our kids.

While we at the parish - staff and volunteers - certainly play a role, the truth is that parents and extended families are the most influential agents in forming the faith of their children. You teach by the way you live your life, in words and actions, every single day. To that end, it is so important to be enthusiastic about and share your faith with your family. This is already demonstrated by the fact that you registered your son or daughter for faith formation. Some other ways to model your faith include being involved in formation activities, getting to know other families with children of the same age, creating a holy home by eating, playing and praying together, and most importantly, attending Sunday mass as a family.

May God continue to bless you and your holy work,

Tere Delgado
Faith Formation Minister

Children's Faith Formation Team

Little Church (pre-k/ K)	Soraya Thenoz	soraya@padreserra.org
Spark! (grades 1-5)		
Grades 1 and 2	Jennifer Gutierrez (805) 482-6417 x346	jennifer@padreserra.org
& Children's Initiation (non-Baptized child)		
Grades 3-5	Christine Olsen (805) 482-6417 x349	christine@padreserra.org
Three:Sixteen Middle School Ministry (6-8)		
Mr. Mike Ramirez & team		threesixteen@padreserra.org
Confirmation (HighSchool)		
Youth Minister	Brett Becker	brett@padreserra.org
Youth Ministry Assistant	Martha Rodriguez	youthministry@padreserra.org
First Communion Sacrament preparation (all grades) & all children's programs		
Faith Formation Minister	Tere Delgado (805) 482-6417 x347	tere@padreserra.org

About Our Curriculum



FAITH FORMATION

Our curriculum embraces our children's everyday experiences, helps them discern where God is at work in their lives and what He is calling them to do.

At almost every gathering we read the Gospel for the up-coming Sunday, then reflect and share on what we heard and how it might apply to our lives this week. Over time, this can be a profound part of our weekly faith routine, to actually be in touch with God in our daily lives.

This method of preparation for Sunday mass can also be done at home to prepare everyone for a more meaningful worship experience. We also take time to learn about our Catholic Tradition, prayers and devotions.

Preschool and kindergarten children learn to relate to the care and great love of God for them through self-awareness, nature and making friends. Mrs. Soraya will put together a fun lesson with songs and crafts and children will begin to learn basic prayers. This is a Co-Op program, parents sign up to lead 4 sessions a year. We will offer Little Church on Sundays during the 9:00 am and 11:00 am Mass times.

Elementary school age children learn through prayer, games, crafts and hands-on lessons to unfold the life story of Jesus and develop a relationship with Him. Putting into action and participating in the Liturgy, Sacraments, Christian living, Community and Service. We host three family gatherings which are essential for reinforcing community, fellowship and service. We will return to in-person sessions this year.

Middle school youth discover ways to follow Jesus' great commandments to love our God and love our neighbor through scripture, faith sharing, and fellowship and games. Kids can join at any time of the program year.

High School youth develop an independent Catholic Christian identity by sharing their unique gifts with the larger community and those in need, participating in faith sharing and learning groups, and developing a consciousness to live as a disciple of Jesus in our world today. They will participate in parish ministry, engaging them in parish community life.

Policy Matters and Expectations

Know the Rules



Attendance

Consistent attendance is essential for the spiritual development of our young people. Children are expected to attend *all* Formation sessions, including Family Events. Attendance is especially important for Sacrament prep children/teens. *Children should not have more than 3 and teens not more than 2 (excused/unexcused) absences per program year.* If a child/teen is ill and unable to attend, please call 482-6417 or email and let us know. This courtesy helps us not to wait and to plan materials efficiently.

Sign-In and Sign-Out: During in person gatherings, All Children, pre-k through grade 8 must be signed in and out by a parent or authorized adult, every time. Sign in sheets will be at every meeting room. Parents may authorize their High School students to sign themselves in and out. Confirmation teens will need to sign in at all events (sessions, ministry, parish service or parish events).

Late pick ups: If you are running late, please call us to let us know (805) 482-6417. After 10 minutes all children (grades 1-5), will be taken to the parish office, where you can pick up your child and sign them out!! After 25 minutes, emergency contact persons will be contacted if parents can not be reached.

Discipline

The word “discipline” has the same root word as the word “disciple” which means faithful followers. It is our hope that all our young people are faithful followers when they come to any church gathering. They should be prepared to be good listeners, follow directions and participate fully in the session that has been planned for the group.

In general, if an issue arises, we first speak with the young person, then if needed, we discuss the issue with parents. If needed we may require the parent to attend the gathering with the child/teen. Likewise, if a child or parent has an issue with a catechist/leader, first speak with that Catechist/leader, then if needed, discuss the issue with the program coordinator or Tere Delgado. Please keep in mind that our catechists are parents, grandparents and parishioners like you. We need your help and support to remind your child to be at their best behavior and respectful to all.

Restrooms

We recommend you take your child to use the restroom before dropping them off to their centers. If a child (Little Church through grade 5) needs to have a restroom break, we always send 2 or 3 along with an adult or teen leader. Everyone including middle school and high school use church restrooms. Confirmation teens use Serra Center restrooms on Sundays.

Accident Insurance

The parish purchases limited accident insurance that includes Emergency Sickness Benefit to help with costs not covered by other insurance you may have for your child. For the event that may happen on our campus or during a program event.

Medical Emergencies

Minor cuts, scrapes, illnesses, headaches and accidents will be handled with common sense and basic first aid. No aspirin or medication can be given to a child or youth without written permission. In the case of serious injury or illness the parent will be called. If the parent cannot be reached, the leader will obtain medical care according to the signed emergency medical release form.

Natural Disasters, Environmental or Safety Emergencies

Leaders will keep the children or youth together until an authorized person arrives for them. They will evacuate or shelter-in-place and call the appropriate agency as warranted by the nature of the emergency.



Safeguard the Children — Child Protection

In accordance with Archdiocesan policy all adults who work with or around children must attend **Protecting God's Children** sexual abuse prevention training. Additionally, adults who supervise children must be live-scan fingerprinted by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. There are always at least two adult leaders assigned to every gathering. Every effort is made to ensure the safety of our children in every regard.

The prevention of child sexual abuse requires more than adult awareness, education and training. **The Empowering God's Children Program**, required by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, is a vehicle through which parents, teachers, leaders and youth ministers teach children and young people the tools they need to protect themselves from those who might harm them.

Parents are invited to attend the The Empowering God's Children workshop, as well as to receive a copy of "Teaching Touching Safety: A Guide for Parents" at your request. It is important that the family continue the conversation at home.

Please keep an eye on your children, and all children, at all times, especially on Sundays and at large events.

"Keep the joy of loving God in your heart and share this joy with all you meet, especially your family."
- Mother Teresa