



Faith Formation Parent Handbook

Program year 2020/2021

PY21

Encounter Jesus, Be Disciples

5205 Upland Road

Camarillo, CA 93012

Dear Parish Formation Families,

September 1, 2020

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.

In light of the covid-19, please know that your children's health and safety is our priority. We are continuing to follow CDC guidelines as well as those from the LA Archdiocese. We are committed to provide the best health and safety measures while your children are with us here on campus. We will also be prepared to continue to provide materials for distance learning should that be the recommendation. We will begin the program year with distance learning for all grade levels. For our Elementary and Middle School children; we will provide lesson plans and materials for parents to lead each lesson. You will have the support of Catechist and Coordinators who will be checking in and be available to help with any questions. High School teens will meet for sessions and youth group using zoom.

May God continue to bless you and your holy work,

Tere Delgado

Faith Formation Minister

## About Our Curriculum

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 Thenoz will put together a fun lesson with songs and crafts and children will begin to learn basic prayers. Lesson plans will be emailed, for parents to lead each lesson until we are able to resume sessions on campus.

Elementary school age children learn and unfold the life story of Jesus and develop a relationship with Him through liturgy and prayer, Christian living and sacraments, community and service. We host three family gatherings (October, November, March) which are essential for reinforcing community, fellowship and service. This year because of the pandemic we will host "Family Events" only if we can safely gather following all the safety protocols. This year we will also use "Christ in Us" textbook by Sadlier, along with lesson plans put together by our Coordinators Mrs. Jennifer Gutierrez and Mrs. Christine Olsen. This year we are offering two options for enrollment, all year distance learning, or a combined distance and on campus learning (limited spaces for this option)

Middle school youth discover ways to follow Jesus' great commandments to love our God and love our neighbor through scripture, faith sharing, and fellowship. We will begin the year meeting virtually using zoom as well as some parent lead lessons. When it is safe to do so we will invite the kids to return to campus.

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. We will begin the program year meeting virtually using zoom. When it is safe to do so we will invite the teens on campus.

## 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 specially important for Sacrament prep children/teens. Children and teens should not have more than 3 (excused/unexcused) absences per program year.

**In-Person gatherings:** Attendance is taken as children are signed in. 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 should be indoors in the meeting rooms. 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.

### \*Distance learning attendance:

Spark! will be taken as E-portal lessons are completed.

Three:Sixteen MSM and Confirmation: attendance is taken when kids/teens log in to Zoom gatherings.

### 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 their parents. We may require the parent to attend the gathering with the child. Likewise, if a child or parent has an issue with a leader, first speak with that leader, then if needed, discuss the issue with a parish coordinator. 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.

### Distance learning/ virtual gatherings:

*Image from virtual library*

It is important for all our virtual gatherings to be done in a safe and secure environment. Parents please take time to review with your child/teen what it means to be a Good Digital Citizen.

1. Protect private information; children and teens should have a clear understanding of what is personal identifying information. Such as full names, addresses or any log in's and passwords. Any images/ pictures should be approved by parents prior to sharing.
2. Set up computer/laptop or tablet in an open public space where parents can supervise any online session.
3. Respect themselves and others. Cyberbullying will not be tolerated.
4. When logging in to virtual gatherings (Zoom) teens will need to engage camera and microphone, teens need to log in using their name, please avoid nicknames (eg. Pinky, Ace, Princess, sport )



### 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

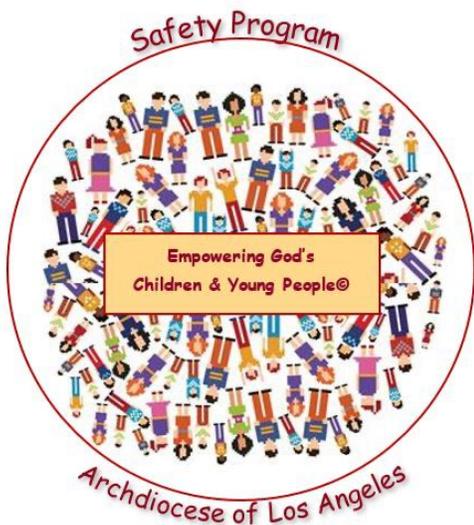
The parish purchases limited accident insurance that includes Emergency Sickness Benefit to help with costs not covered by other insurance you may have for your child. For the event that may happen on our campus or during a program event.

## 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***

## Protocols for in person sessions 2020-2021

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles along with the state of California will allow parishes to gather for faith formation for children and teens in counties that are not on the COVID-19 watch list using the protocols listed below. *This applies to Confirmation teens, Three: Sixteen and Children in Spark! who enrolled in combined distance and in person sessions.*

➤ All Grade levels will begin the 20/21 catechetical year with Distance learning online sessions. Middle School and High school teens will gather via zoom. For Spark! workbooks and e-portal access will be provided and lesson plans along with materials will be handed out once a month. Parents will lead home lessons with the help of Catechist and coordinators.

➤ When possible weather allows, gatherings will be done outdoors, using natural shade areas and canopies when needed. When the weather is not good we will do indoor sessions, or opt for a virtual gathering.

➤ Each time a child/teen gathers for faith formation, they will do so with the same small group. Small groups should not intermingle. Limited spaces for in-person sessions. For everyone's safety we will not add any children/teens to in-person centers once we begin our gatherings. We will only offer the distance learning option.

➤ Gathering spaces must be adequate to accommodate social distancing (six feet) of all students. Indoor spaces will be sanitized, before and after each gathering.

\*Pre-School- Elementary centers: The group size is small. No more than 8 per group (including catechists and aides).

\*Middle school and high school will use our large space rooms, and will accommodate social distancing of six feet.

- Everyone must wear a mask over mouth and nose during the entire time they are on campus. (Session time 60 minutes + arrival and departure time)
- Everyone must practice social distancing of six feet.
- Hand Sanatizer will be provided at all gatherings. \*Spark! Parents are encouraged to take the children to wash their hands before each session.
- In order to mitigate the spread of the virus, children attending faith formation in person must provide their own supplies; writing utensils, crayons, markers, workbooks (Spark!) and Bibles (5th grade and Three:Sixteen) other needed supplies to sessions. Supplies can not be stored on campus, they will need to be brought in every session. **Sharing of these materials is not allowed.** Suggested list will be provided.
- Drop Off / Pick Up

Parents should still sign their children in and out of faith formation class. This should be done in a way that minimizes the contact of parents with other people. A catechist aide or volunteer can sign children in and out for parents with a clipboard as they are dropped off or picked up. Wellness check will be done at arrival, and if necessary a temperature check will be done.

A staff member or volunteer will ensure children/teens are wearing masks entering and exiting the vehicle at drop off and pick up locations.

Lastly, despite all the anxieties, stresses, and insecurities of every kind and level these Covid-19 have made us experience, we can still find rays of hope. We are challenged on how steadfast our faith is and trust in God. We are asked to pray more deeply with all our heart to overcome the difficulties and challenges we are facing in our world. We ask God to sustain us in all our needs, keep us safe and protect us from all harm.

## Children's Faith Formation Team

Little Church (pre-k/ K) Soraya Thenoz [soraya@padreserra.org](mailto:soraya@padreserra.org)

Liturgy of the Word: (grades 1-5) 9:00am Sue Woods 11:00am Sheila Montgomery

## Spark! (grades 1-5)

Jennifer Gutierrez Grades 1 and 2  
Coordinator

805-482-6417 x 346

[jennifer@padreserra.org](mailto:jennifer@padreserra.org)

Christine Olsen Grades 3-5 Coordinator

805-482-6417 x 349

[christine@padreserra.org](mailto:christine@padreserra.org)

## Three: Sixteen Middle School Ministry (grades 6-8)

Lead: Mr. Mike Ramirez and Martha Rodriguez [youthministry@padreserra.org](mailto:youthministry@padreserra.org)

## Initiation (non-Baptized children)

Catherine Shadduck 805-482-6417 x 331 [catherine@padreserra.org](mailto:catherine@padreserra.org)

## Confirmation (HighSchool)

Brett Becker Youth Minister [brett@padreserra.org](mailto:brett@padreserra.org)

Martha Rodriguez Youth Ministry Assistant [youthministry@padreserra.org](mailto:youthministry@padreserra.org)

## Faith Formation Minister and First Communion Sacrament preparation (all grades)

Tere Delgado 805-482-6417 x 347 [tere@padreserra.org](mailto:tere@padreserra.org)