



Faith Formation Parent Handbook

Program Year 2021/2022

PY22

Encounter Jesus, Be Disciples

5205 Upland Road
Camarillo, CA 93012

June 1, 2021

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.

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 are hopeful we will return to in-person sessions for this program year. However we are prepared to support your family should we need to do distance learning. For our Elementary children; we will provide lesson plans and materials for parents to lead each lesson.

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 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 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 host 3 whole "Family Events" following all the safety protocols mandated for the state, county. We will use "Christ in Us" textbook by Sadlier, along with lesson plans put together by our Coordinators Mrs. Jennifer Gutierrez and Mrs. Christine Olsen. We have every intention to return to in-person sessions, however we are prepared for distance learning should it be necessary.

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.

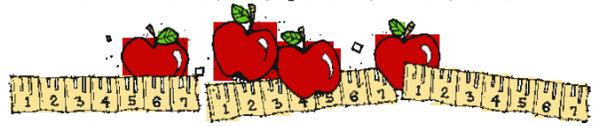
High School youth develop an independent Catholic Christian identity by sharing their unique gifts with the larger community and those in need, participating in faith sharing and learning groups, and developing a consciousness to live as a disciple of Jesus in our world today. They will participate in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

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. 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 a 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.

Distance learning/ virtual gatherings:

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)



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 2021- 2022

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. We will follow all safety guidelines required by the State, County and Archdiocese, to provide the safest environment possible. Protocols will be adjusted to the most current recommendations and requirements.

➤ We have every intention to have All Grade levels will begin the 21/22 catechetical year in-person sessions. We will only move to distance learning if required by State and local health authorities.

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

*Pre-School- Elementary centers: The group size is small, 8/ 10 per group including catechists and aides.

*Middle school and high school will use our large rooms, and will accommodate a social distance.

➤ 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) Single use masks will be provided for those who need one. *updates to protocol will be done as required by state and county requirements.

➤ We are requiring our volunteers and Catechists to be fully vaccinated.

➤ 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.

➤ Hand Sanatizer will be provided at all gatherings. *Spark! Parents are encouraged to take the children to wash their hands before each session.

➤ Drop Off / Pick Up

Parents still need to sign in 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. Wellness check will be done at arrival, and if necessary a temperature check will be done.

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

Spark! (grades 1-5)

Jennifer Gutierrez Grades 1 and 2 Coordinator

(805) 482-6417 x346

jennifer@padreserra.org

Christine Olsen Grades 3-5 Coordinator

(805) 482-6417 x349

christine@padreserra.org

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

Lead: Mr. Mike Ramirez and Martha Rodriguez

youth@padreserra.org

Initiation (non-Baptized children)

Catherine Shadduck

(805) 482-6417 x331

catherine@padreserra.org

Confirmation (HighSchool)

Brett Becker

Youth Minister

brett@padreserra.org

Martha Rodriguez

Youth Ministry Assistant

youth@padreserra.org

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

Tere Delgado

(805) 482-6417 x347

tere@padreserra.org