

FAITH FORMATION  
FAMILY  
HANDBOOK

2011-12

HOLY NAME OF MARY PARISH

724 E. Bonita Avenue San Dimas, Calif. 91773

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

## Welcome to Holy Name of Mary Faith Formation Programs for Preschool – Grade 5!

We are very happy to be a part of your family's faith journey. It is a privilege to teach your children about our Catholic faith, and the staff and volunteers at Holy Name of Mary embrace our task with faith and joy. This Family Handbook contains information and program policies to help you and your child to have the best experience possible. It also contains some suggestions for faith at home and traditional prayers. Parents are the first and foremost teachers of their children, and the Faith Formation staff is here to support you in passing on your faith to your children in whatever way we can.

### STAFF INFORMATION:

Charlie Martinez, Director of Faith Formation

(909) 599-1243 x234

[Charlie@hnmparish.org](mailto:Charlie@hnmparish.org)

Melanie Bailey, Coordinator of Catechetical Programs (Preschool – Grade 5)

(909) 599-1243 x232

[Melanie@hnmparish.org](mailto:Melanie@hnmparish.org)

Gabriella Ulloa, Confirmation Coordinator

(909) 599-1243 x234

[Gabby@hnmparish.org](mailto:Gabby@hnmparish.org)

Faith Formation Office Hours (during academic year)

Sunday, 9 am – 1 pm

Monday – Thursday, 12 noon – 8 pm

### GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Scheduled days and times of classes:

Sunday	10:00 – 11:00 am	Sunday School (Preschool / Kindergarten)
Monday	4:15 – 5:30 pm	Grade 1-5 Year 1 Sacrament students Grade 3-5 Continuing students (have made 1 <sup>st</sup> Communion)
Wednesday	5:45 – 7:00 pm	Grade 2-5 Year 2 Sacrament students Grade 3-5 Continuing students (have made 1 <sup>st</sup> Communion)

2. Curriculum:

The Preschool and Elementary Faith Formation use resources from Our Sunday Visitor Curriculum Division. The curriculum has been approved through the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. It is based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the General Directory for Catechesis, and the National Directory for Catechesis.

3. Catechists & Aides:

Catechists and Aides are volunteers who are sharing their faith and knowledge of Catholicism with the children of the parish. The Holy Name of Mary Faith Formation office provides training and encourages additional training through the Archdiocesan Basic Catechist certification process, local workshops, regional congress, and the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress in Anaheim.

In accordance with Archdiocesan policy, all staff, catechists, and aide are fingerprinted for the L.A. Archdiocese and attend a VIRTUS Protecting God's Children session to learn about the prevention of child abuse.

4. Communication with Parents:

The primary form of communication used by the Faith Formation staff is email. We will contact you for an updated email address if an email is returned to us as undeliverable. Please update our office if you change your email address. Also, please check that your email server is not blocking email addresses ending in "hnmparish.org". Communication will only be mailed home to families with no available email address.

5. Tuition payments:

Tuition that is not paid in full at the time of registration must be paid in installments on a monthly basis until paid in full. Faith Formation staff will work with families to determine an agreeable payment plan to fulfill the tuition agreement. Monthly bills are not sent home – please use the payment envelopes provided by the Faith Formation office to meet your monthly commitment. **No child will be turned away from Holy Name of Mary Faith Formation Programs based on finances** – please contact us to discuss any special circumstances.

6. Student Insurance:

All students are insured in case of injury while attending faith formation classes. This insurance is included in the tuition fee.

7. Property & Facilities:

Our Faith Formation programs take place in the Holy Name of Mary School classrooms, library, and science room. We appreciate the warm hospitality of the staff and faculty of the school, and we expect our students to respect the desks, personal property and classroom resources with appropriate behavior. The Faith Formation staff will notify parents of damage or loss caused by their child, and the parents may be asked to pay for repairs or replacements.

8. Emergency and Earthquake Procedures:

In the event of an emergency such as fire or earthquake, the buildings will be evacuated to a central emergency assembly area (most likely the basketball court.) The students will be supervised until a parent or authorized adult arrives to pick them up. Students will only be released to parents or adults whose names are listed on the emergency paper from registration. A signature will be required to release the student from the school campus. If there has been a

recent earthquake or other community wide emergency, please check with the Faith Formation office before sending your child to class.

### PROGRAM POLICIES:

1. Attendance:

Each student is allowed 3 absences for reasons such as illness, family emergency, etc. We appreciate your scheduling doctor appointments and sport activities at times other than faith formation classes. You do not have to call the Faith Formation office to report an absence. However, after an absence, parents should discuss with the catechist what their child missed and make up any chapters covered at home.

There are only 23 classes scheduled from October through May, and during each class, the catechist covers important content to give students an in-depth look at the Catholic faith and especially the sacraments they are preparing to receive. If a child is absent more than 3 times, parents must contact the Faith Formation office to discuss the child's continuation in the program.

2. Arrival / Dismissal:

Sunday School (Preschool / Kindergarten) students must be signed in and out by their parents or another authorized adult at their classroom when they arrive and leave. Students may arrive up to 10 minutes early.

Elementary (Grade 1-5) students must be dropped off at their classroom by a parent or authorized adult. Students may arrive up to 10 minutes early. Please wait until your child's catechist or aide arrives and your child is able to enter the classroom before you leave. Children are not allowed to enter the classrooms until the catechist or aide is present. For their safety, children should never be playing outside on the playground unsupervised prior to class!

At the end of class, all elementary students must be signed out by a parent or authorized adult at their classrooms. Please do not send older siblings to the class to pick up younger siblings – all students must be picked up by an adult. We consider this sign out policy essential to your child's safety and a wonderful opportunity to connect with your child's catechist on a regular basis.

Authorized adults are any adults listed on the emergency form filled out at registration. Each teacher will also have a sheet in their Attendance binder where you can note who is authorized to pick up your child. Please add names to this sheet during the first few class sessions in order for the catechist to have a reference list of authorized adults on hand. If there are special custody issues and certain persons not authorized to pick up your child, please notify both the Faith Formation office and your child's catechist.

If you need to pick up your child early, please come to the Faith Formation office. You will sign out your child there, and a staff member will locate your child and bring him/her to the office.

Please schedule appointments / activities at other times to allow your child to stay for the full class period.

3. Tardiness:

Please make every effort to have your child to class on time. Classes are 1 hour and 15 minutes and need to start on time to cover the material thoroughly. We will contact parents whose children arrive tardy on a regular basis to discuss our concerns.

4. Visitors:

Parents are always welcome as visitors in the classrooms to observe their child and the material that he/she is learning. Please stop by the Faith Formation office for a Visitor's Badge. Child visitors are also welcome (if a student has a relative or friend that would like join them for a class.) Please notify your child's catechist that a child visitor will be staying for class and come by the Faith Formation office to fill out an emergency form for the visiting child.

5. Discipline:

Below are some general guidelines for good behavior during faith formation classes:

Respect for each other and the catechist/aide.

No gum during class time.

Students cannot leave the classroom without permission.

In the classroom, no marking on the desks or going into the contents of the desks.

No running in the hallways.

Disruptive behavior of students is not acceptable. The following process occurs when a behavior issue arises:

1. A verbal warning will be given to the student by the catechist or aide.
2. If the behavior continues, the student will be sent to the Faith Formation office to discuss the behavior. A written conduct referral will be added to his/her file. The parent may be asked to pick up the child early and will be notified of the behavior issue.
3. If the student is sent to the office a second time, the parent will be asked to pick up the student and meet with the catechist / Faith Formation staff to discuss the concerns. The parent may be asked to attend class with their child until the behavior issue is resolved.
4. A student who continues to disrupt the class may be dropped from the program.

6. Sacraments:

Holy Name of Mary Parish follows L.A. Archdiocesan policy of two consecutive years of sacrament preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. The first year of preparation provides an overview of the Catholic faith. The second year reviews key concepts from the first year with an in-depth look at the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

During the second year of sacrament preparation, there are several required sessions for parents and parent & child to fully prepare families for their child's First Reconciliation and Eucharist.

Please see the calendar for these dates – more detail on each session is noted on the back of the calendar and reminders will be emailed as the dates approach.

Students who are 7 years old or older and have not been baptized attend the RCIA adapted for children sessions. After at least two year in the process, these students are fully initiated into the Catholic Church through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. Please contact the Faith Formation office for more information on the dates / times of these sessions.

7. Teaching Touching Safety:

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 Teaching Touching Safety Program for Children* was adopted by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in September, 2006.

In compliance with the Archdiocese, Holy Name of Mary Faith Formation Programs present the *Teaching Touching Safety* program, a sexual abuse prevention program, to our students (Elementary – High School) during one class session on an annual basis. Each child will attend an age-appropriate session. This program is provided to us by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and is a part of our ongoing effort to help create and maintain a safe environment for children and to protect all children from sexual abuse.

At registration, we asked parents to sign either a permission or opt out form for the *Teaching Touching Safety* program. If you chose to opt out, we will contact you and ask that you keep your child at home for that session and cover the material with them. The *Teaching Touching Safety* Guide is given to new families at the beginning of the year parents' meeting; if you received the Guide in the past, you do not need to take another copy. If you have questions about the program, please contact the Faith Formation office. For more information on the *Touching Safety* program, visit the *VIRTUS Online*<sup>TM</sup> website at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org)

8. Textbooks:

The textbooks belong to the students and they should feel free to write in them and to keep them at the end of the year. Please make sure that your child brings his/her textbook to class each time if the textbook is sent home with the child. If the textbook is lost, please notify the Faith Formation office and your child's textbook will be replaced at the parent's expense.

FAITH AT HOME:

The Faith Formation staff and volunteers are privileged to work with parents to pass along the Catholic faith to children. We support your efforts at home to be a practicing Catholic family. It is within the home that a child learns of love, trust, morality, and community. In our faith formation programs, we build on that foundation by giving students the content and curriculum to know the beliefs of the Catholic

Church and encourage them to live as followers of Jesus Christ. There are several ways you can support your child's faith growth at home:

1. Going to Mass as a family: One of the most important commitments that parents can make to their child's faith life is attending Sunday Mass. It affects their understanding of liturgy, prayer, community life, and the mystery of Jesus present in Eucharist. Please make this a high priority for your family's weekend schedule, especially in the midst of their preparation for the sacrament of First Communion.
2. Teach your child the basic prayers of our faith (included at the end of this Handbook): Take time every day to pray with your child. Catechists will spend time in prayer with their students but only through regular repetition at home will children learn their basic prayers. These prayers connect them to Catholics everywhere and help them to fully participate in liturgy. They also help form a child's image of God as they witness your relationship with the Divine. They come to understand that God is someone who listens to us and with whom we spend time.
3. Incorporate all kinds of prayer into family life: Beyond our basic prayers, there are many ways for a family to unite in prayer. Some possibilities include: praying before meals, praying in thanksgiving when something wonderful happens, praying for those who are in need – both those we know and those affected by tragedies in the news, tracing the sign of the cross in blessing on our children's foreheads and asking them to bless us too, blessing children with holy water when they are ill, praying the rosary together to honor Mary, setting up an advent wreath and reading from scripture when we light it, visiting church to "talk to Jesus" during the week, etc.

#### PRAYERS OF OUR FAITH:

The Sign of the Cross: In the name of Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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.

Hail Mary: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee! Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory to the Father: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. 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. Amen.