

**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FAITH FORMATION**

**PARENT HANDBOOK GRADES 1 - 7**

**FR. LEO J. BUTLER**

**PASTOR**

**201-768-1600; [immaculateconception@iccnorwood.org](mailto:immaculateconception@iccnorwood.org)**

**LOUISE LUCIVERO**

**COORDINATOR GRADES 1 - 5**

**201-768-1771; [icc\\_ccd@yahoo.com](mailto:icc_ccd@yahoo.com)**

**CHRISTINA BENAQUISTA**

**COORDINATOR GRADES 6—7**

**201-694-7832; [christinaben.icc@gmail.com](mailto:christinaben.icc@gmail.com)**



Dear Faith Formation Families,

This handbook is designed to introduce our Faith Formation program to our families. Our goal is to insure that all families, newly registered or re-registered, are informed of all procedures and regulations of our program. Our program is an extension of your child's spiritual development. We hope to deepen their relationship with God beyond weekly Masses and build upon and enrich what is practiced at home.

Class Masses are our way to honor each student and their families. These Masses are a family event. Please make every effort to attend these Masses with your children.

We encourage families of students of all grades to frequently visit our website, [www.iccnorwood.org](http://www.iccnorwood.org), where you will find a link to our Faith Formation pages. These pages are arranged by grades and will have the most up to date information on all levels of our program. You will find the current calendar, all forms, and events in our program. There you will also find our periodic newsletters for all grades. These newsletters will allow you to be an active participant in your child's education by informing you of current projects lessons and activities in which the children are engaged in our program.

Our Faith Formation program relies on the cooperation and active participation of all families in our program. We encourage all who are able to volunteer as class parent, substitute, or new catechist if needed. With the assistance of parents in these roles our program will be able to continue the spiritual and theological level which we have always maintained. Anyone wishing to assist in any capacity in our program must complete the Church mandated Protecting God's Children program. Information on that program can be obtained by contacting the rectory at 2901-768-1600. We are sincerely grateful to all who are moved by the Holy Spirit to assist us and our wonderful students in any way.

**YOU MUST SIGN AND RETURN THE FORM BELOW**  
**TO THE ICC FAITH FORMATION OFFICE**  
**BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER OR WITHIN A WEEK OF RECEIVING IT**  
**FOR YOUR CHILD TO ENTER OR CONTINUE IN THE**  
**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM.**

---

---

**PARENT AFFIRMATION FOR IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**  
**FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM**

**FAMILY NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **GRADE** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **GRADE** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **GRADE** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **GRADE** \_\_\_\_\_

**I have received and read the Parent Handbook for Immaculate Conception Faith Formation Program.**

---

Parent Signature

Date

### **First Eucharist:**

The child must have met all the criteria for First Reconciliation and have made First Reconciliation.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

All texts are approved by the Archdiocese of Newark and are in accordance with the teachings found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Textbooks belong to your child and can be kept at years end. We encourage you to look over what your child is learning each week and to share in his/her faith formation.

### **PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**

Our Faith Formation program can accomplish much with the assistance of all of us. We ask parents to volunteer in whatever capacity their schedule allows. Please consider helping us with this very important responsibility of sharing Jesus with your child. Volunteers are needed to assist as substitute catechists and class parents. Please make every effort to help where and when you can.

***Please note that a requirement for assisting in any way in a program involving the children requires completion of "Protecting God's Children" (PGC) program.*** For information on this program please contact the Rectory at 201-768-1600. ***PGC is an important and valuable program for all parents, as it enhances your awareness of the many dangers your children may encounter on the internet and in and out of the school environment, along with recommendations on the most appropriate way to handle a myriad of situations.***

### **CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD**

The children of our parish have the opportunity to participate in the Liturgy of the Word for Children on designated Sunday mornings at the 10:00 AM Mass. Children are invited during the Liturgy of the Word to hear and participate in Scripture on their level of learning. Please see the bulletin or our website at [www.iccnorwood.org](http://www.iccnorwood.org) for a listing of dates.

### **AN INVITATION**

We invite all parents, family members, and others who may not have completed the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, First Eucharist and Confirmation) to contact Fr. Leo if you wish to explore completing these or any other sacramental issue.

May God bless you and your family!

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The parish of Immaculate Conception is committed to a dynamic partnership with parents of the children who attend our parish Faith Formation program. Our Catholic faith is identified by our belief in Jesus Christ and the writings and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Our goal is to develop in each child and family a sense of belonging to the larger Faith Community, and to promote a faith that is alive and which affects our everyday actions.

The formal Faith Formation of a child builds on what the family has begun in the earlier years and continues throughout their lives. We believe in a strong partnership between families and religious educators. This requires a working relationship of communication, collaboration, and cooperation. The Faith Formation program provides instruction; the family provides practice in the home, the community, and our world. Family participation and practice will insure our program can deeply root the faith in all its members. The active participation in weekly worship, family prayer, service to others, and a faithful attendance at scheduled religion classes will enrich both the family and the faith community of Immaculate Conception.

### **WORSHIP AND PARISH REGISTRATION**

We expect families who attend our parish Faith Formation program to be registered in the parish and practicing members of the parish. This is accomplished through active participation and attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days, participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation at various times of the year, and other liturgical practices and events of the Church and our parish.

To register in the parish, please complete a parish census which can be obtained through the Rectory Office, the Faith Formation Office, or on our parish website at [www.iccnorwood.org](http://www.iccnorwood.org).

### **MASS SCHEDULE:**

**SATURDAY EVENING - 5:00 PM**

**SUNDAY - 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM, and 12:00 NOON**

**SUNDAYS IN JULY AND AUGUST - 8:00 AM and 12 NOON**

## **RECONCILIATION:**

**FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH - 3:00 - 4:00 PM  
OR BY APPOINTMENT - CALL THE RECTORY 201-768-1600**

### **FAITH FORMATION OFFICE**

The office is located on the main floor of 200 Summit Street and classes are also held there on the main floor. The office may be reached by calling **201-768-1771** or email at **icc\_ccd@yahoo.com**

### **CALENDAR**

Calendars are given to all registrants at the initial meeting and submission of forms. Calendars for the following year will be mailed or otherwise distributed to each re-registrant at the end of the Faith Formation year or as soon as available. Calendars can also be found on our website at [www.iccnorwood.org](http://www.iccnorwood.org) under the drop-down menu for Faith Formation. Please keep your calendar in a prominent place so you can refer to it throughout the year. You will be notified separately of any major changes or additions to the calendar.

### **ADDRESSES / PHONE NUMBERS / EMAILS / MOVING**

Please notify the Faith Formation Office (201-768-1771) if you have a change of address, phone number, or email. When moving or changing programs, please notify us of the change. The office will provide a letter and record of your child's religious instruction and sacramental information to your new parish.

### **WE ARE A PARISH FAMILY**

We strive to be supportive and sensitive to any special needs that a child may have. Please share this information with the Faith Formation Office and/or the catechist that may help us support your child's needs. If a family is experiencing any serious health concern or change in family structure, please share that information so we may be supportive during these family difficulties. Such information will only be shared on a need to know basis.

### **CLASS SCHEDULES**

Classes for students in **grades 1-5** will be on Tuesdays from **3:00-4:30 PM**. Students in grades 6-8 will meet bi-weekly on Sundays from 10:15 AM to 11:45AM, and attend 12:00noon when a fam-

## **REQUIRED PRAYERS FOR EACH GRADE**

Children are expected to know various prayers as they receive their religious instruction. Parents must assist them in the learning and saying of these prayers.

### **The Following is a List of Prayers by Grade Level**

**Grade 1:** The sign of the Cross, Hail Mary, Lord's Prayer (Our Father), Guardian Angel Prayer, Grace Before and After Meals

**Grade 2:** All the above plus Glory Be and The Act of Contrition

**Grade 3:** All the above plus Lamb of God (Mass) and Apostles' Creed

**Grade 4:** All the above plus "Lord I am not worthy..." (Mass), "Holy, Holy, Holy..." (Mass), Fatima Prayer, and Hail Holy Queen

**Grade 5:** All the above plus Penitential Act: I confess to Almighty God... (Mass) and Gloria (Mass) and Beatitudes

**Grade 6:** All the above plus Nicene Creed, Mysteries of Faith (Mass)

**Grade 7:** All the above plus all Mass Responses and Come Holy Spirit

*Additional prayers may be required at any level at the discretion of the catechist, coordinator, or Pastor.*

### **RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENTS**

*Parent and child attendance at weekly Sunday Mass is an automatic pre-requisite for the child's reception of the sacraments. The Archdiocesan Policy requires TWO years preparation for the reception of these sacraments. Parent meetings will be held to outline the necessary preparation and at least one parent is required to attend these meetings.*

Children will not automatically become candidates for First Reconciliation or First Communion simply because they are in the appropriate grade level. Only students who have had a history of continuous attendance and have acceptable knowledge of each grade level in Faith Formation will be eligible.

**First Reconciliation:** Child must be baptized, be in at least the second grade, and have completed first grade religious studies.

8. Listen to others without interrupting.
9. Do not move about the classroom unless required by the activity.
10. Do not disrupt a class activity by speech or actions.
11. Respect the books or other materials provided. If a workbook goes home for the completion of an assignment it must be returned the following session. Loss of books or materials may result in a fee for families to replace lost or damaged materials.
12. Honor, care for and respect all school and church property.
13. Arrive to class on time. Access to the school building is restricted (see Attendance section).
14. No use of electronic equipment such as cell phones, Game boy, CD players, iPods or similar equipment unless approved by the catechist. Any of these items will be confiscated and later returned to parent.
15. No inappropriate language or use of hands or other body actions.

#### **The Following Disciplinary Actions Apply**

1. First: the catechist will provide a gentle verbal reminder to the child of proper classroom behavior. This may be repeated once with a stern warning of consequences.
2. Second: the catechist will speak to the parent about unacceptable behavior.
3. Third: the parent/emergency contact will be notified to pick up the child immediately. Depending upon the nature of the infraction, additional action may be taken. The child will be responsible for completing all assignments for that day. Prior to returning to the program, the parent will submit, in writing, a letter affirming that action was taken at home to remedy the situation.
4. If inappropriate behavior continues, the parent will be required to attend class with the child to control the behavior. If the parent has not completed Protecting God's Children they will be required to do so before attending Faith Formation class with the child. The child will have to complete lessons at home until such time as that program is completed.

#### **SERVICE PROJECTS**

All children will be expected to participate service projects each year. Service projects will be determined by the DRE, grade coordinator and catechist.

ily Mass is scheduled. Please see the grade calendar for class dates and additional events scheduled.

#### **ARRIVAL, ATTENDANCE, DRESS CODE**

Children in grades 1-5 are to assemble in the church hall at 3:00pm, at which time there will be a short time for them to have a parent provided snack and/or drink prior to walking together to the school across the street at 3:25pm. If the children have already left the church hall, any latecomers should go directly to the school. Children in grades 6-8 should go directly to the school at their assigned time.

Absences from class must be reported by the parent to the Faith Formation Office **prior** to the beginning of that day's class (3:00 PM for grades 1 through 5). For grades 1-5 you may call the office at 201-768-1771, or e-mail at [icc\\_ccd@yahoo.com](mailto:icc_ccd@yahoo.com). Grades 6-7 may call 201- 694- 7832 or e-mail [christinaben.icc@gmail.com](mailto:christinaben.icc@gmail.com). When calling please include child's first & last name, grade, date of absence and reason for absence.

A child's absences should not exceed 4 times in one school year. When a child is absent, the child, with parental help if necessary, must complete the missed lesson before returning to the next class.

It is expected that children will be dressed modestly and appropriately with no images or words depicting violence, vulgarity, or a sexual nature.

#### **DISMISSAL**

At dismissal, either a parent or contact listed on the registration form must pick up the child in front of the school or wherever dismissal has been indicated for that day. Please wait until you see your child's class and then come up to the door so he/she may be dismissed. For the safety of the students, please do not approach the door until you see your child's class. This will allow the catechist to become familiar with you and insure that no child is dismissed inappropriately. If a catechist is unfamiliar with a parent or designated pick up person they may ask for ID until they become familiar with you. Please cooperate with this request as it is for the safety of your child.

If for any reason dismissal location is changed, an email will be sent to the email listed on the registration form.

Early dismissal is done by a written request or phone call from the parent to the Faith Formation Office. Students are not dismissed early without notification from the parents, and may only be released to an individual indicated on the registration form. In the event of early dismissal, the person picking up the child must report to the Faith Formation office.

The parent of any child who has permission to walk home or go unescorted to another location **must** provide the Faith Formation Office with a letter stating such.

Please note that for all grades, entrance to the building once class begins will be restricted. Those wishing admittance must ring the bell and await assistance.

### **TARDINESS**

A student is considered tardy if they are 15 minutes or more late to class. Two recordings of tardy will be considered one absence. Students are expected to be on time for class in order to prevent disruption of the lesson. Please see above paragraph for entrance to the school beyond opening of class time.

### **CANCELATIONS**

If the public schools are closed on a faith formation day due to severe weather, or if there is an early dismissal or cancellation of afterschool activities for the same reason, there will be no faith formation class that day.

### **FAITH AT HOME AND EVALUATIONS**

Twice a year, parents will be given progress reports which reflect a student's in-class participation, homework and test scores. Missed, late or incomplete assignments will be taken into consideration during evaluations.

For most lessons, students will be required to complete a "Faith At Home" activity. Parents may assist with these activities as needed, and depending on the nature of the assignment, may be required to do so. Unit tests in their workbooks may be used for evaluations, and there will be mid and final year reviews. Parents are encouraged to review class work and assignments to keep abreast of their child's progress.

One routine assignment for all grades will be the "Reflection on the

Sunday Mass." Children will be given this assignment at the beginning of each month. They can choose any of the 4 (four) Sundays of the month to complete that month's Reflection. This will be counted as a homework assignment and will be reflected on their progress report.

We will evaluate each child's willingness to learn as judged by attentiveness and participation, their knowledge of their faith, attendance, punctuality, preparedness and respect towards catechist, other students, and property. Students must have a satisfactory knowledge of their grade level material to be promoted to the next grade level.

### **ACRE TEST**

The ACRE test is the February/March Assessment of Catholic Faith Formation for Grades 5 and 8, but may not be given every year. It is an assessment of religious knowledge prepared by the National Catholic Education Association in Washington DC. This tool helps pastors and administrators make informed judgments about the strength and weakness of the parish program of religious instruction. Families are informed when the assessment will take place. The results of a program, not individuals, are sent to the parish and Archdiocese of Newark.

### **DISCIPLINE**

Children are expected to conduct themselves in a way that reflects Christian love toward the catechist, classmates and themselves. It is required that they also show respect for the school, classrooms and outside property. We ask parents to please speak with their children concerning proper conduct and respect for people and property.

### **The Following Rules Apply:**

- 1. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated.**
2. Come to class with a good attitude—open and willing to learn and to pray together.
3. Remove hats upon entering the building.
4. No gum, candy, food or liquids of any kind are allowed in class or in church. Snacks must be consumed in the church hall prior to entering the school building.
5. Bring books, folders, assignments, etc. to each class.
6. Do not argue with adults.
7. Address the catechists by the name the catechist requests.