

**EARLY CHILDHOOD FAITH FORMATION
2014-2015 FAMILY BOOKLET**



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH
Faith Formation Office
9764 Dixie Hwy
Ira Twp., MI 48023
586-725-1762

Immaculate Conception welcomes you to Early Childhood Faith Formation for 3, 4, and pre-kindergarten 5 year-old young members of our parish.

We believe that the first community that nurtures the faith of children is their family. They learn from you at home how to love, how to forgive, how to live as Jesus did. Participation in a faith formation program supports parents as they nurture the faith of their children, by providing another avenue of reinforcement of faithful living. We are glad that your family has chosen Immaculate Conception as the faith community through which you will live out your Catholic Christian faith. We hope that you will plan to be a part of this wonderful learning opportunity for our young Catholic Christians in training.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Each week, your child is invited to join us during the 10:00am Mass on Sunday mornings in the school for an hour of faith learning. This year we will focus our class sessions on the Sunday gospels by listening to age appropriate Bible readings, experiencing Catholic rituals & prayers, making fun activities, learning new songs, enjoying a snack and having fun with other young members of our parish.

REGISTRATION

Immaculate Conception Early Childhood Faith Formation is open to all children age 3, 4, and pre- kindergarten 5 year olds of registered actively participating families. A registered actively participating family should have completed a parish census form and be sharing their time, talent and treasure with our faith community. A family's active participation at Sunday Mass is an essential element in their Catholic Christian faith experience. Each child is to have on file in the Faith Formation Office an Early Childhood Formation Form with current emergency information, cell phone numbers of parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s), and the individual child's medical conditions, medicines, allergies of which we need to be aware.

ATTENDANCE/ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

Young children will benefit the most from weekly participation in this program. The school doors will be open at 9:45am for you to bring your child to the classroom door. Each week we will have an adult waiting to check your child in and put on their name tag. Parents are expected to remain on the Church campus and attend 10:00am Mass. In the event that your child becomes ill, we will call your cell phone from the formation office phone (586-725-1762). We ask that you place your cell phone on vibrate while at Mass and quietly leave church and come immediately to the school if you are called. All children are expected to be picked-up following the 10:00am Mass by parent or guardian.

BEHAVIORIAL EXPECTATIONS

The goal of our program is to build a positive relationship with your child, help them become self-confident, accept one another, learn from one another and to affirm them as a child of God. To accomplish this we will focus on your child's strengths and stress their positive actions. If though, a child is angry or aggressive with the other children they will go to a "time out" area in the classroom to calm down. The child will be welcomed back to the group when she or he appears ready to interact with the other children in a respectful way.

FEES

There are no set fees for this program. We will though have a basket out weekly to accept your donations to help us cover the cost of the handouts, crafts, snacks and supplies.

FOOD AND SNACKS

A snack of graham crackers with apple juice or water will be provided weekly in class. Because of this we ask that no snack, candy or food of any kind be brought into the building by you or your child.

PERSONAL ITEMS

If your 3 year old child is not yet bathroom trained, we ask that their personal items be placed into a zip lock bag and tagged with his or her name. For your convenience, we can keep this packet at faith formation. We ask that no other personal items including toys of any kind be brought to faith formation.

CANCELLATIONS & WEATHER EMERGENCIES

If we need to cancel because of inclement weather, no power, or other unexpected reasons we will have a sign posted on the double doors of the school advising our families of this fact. If time allows, we will put the cancellation information on our office answering machine at 586-725-1762.

FIRE SAFETY and DISASTER PREPARATION

Safety route instructions are posted in each room of the school with directions and a visual explanation for fire or tornado emergencies. This “map” is explained to all the students and a safety drill is preformed. Several areas of the school are designated as safety shelters. Each map shows which shelter is designated for each individual room, based upon proximity of that room to the closest shelter.

Fire Emergency

In the event of a fire, the fire drill will be activated. The fire department will be notified. Everyone will evacuate the building. Catechists and adult helpers will lead the children from the room in a controlled fashion to the designated safety area outside. The catechist/teacher/adult will call roll from the attendance record or register. The last adult to leave will make sure that everyone is out of the building. If any person is missing, a firefighter will be notified immediately.

Building Evacuation/Bomb Threat

In the event of a bomb threat either by letter or phone, the police will be notified immediately and their instructions will be followed. If the school building is evacuated, the children will be moved to the shelter in the parish hall.

CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse is a serious concern. Our staff has a moral and legal responsibility to comply with the law to ensure the welfare of a child. If a member of the Faith Formation staff believes there is a suspected abuse or if someone communicates to a member of the Faith Formation staff a suspect abuse, that person will inform the Director of Religious Education who will then notify the Pastor of the concern. Pursuant to state law, we are required to report suspected child abuse and we will also follow diocesan policy on such matters.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Effective September 2003, the Archbishop of Detroit mandates that a criminal history background check be conducted for all church personnel as well as volunteers and adult helpers working in any parish who have unsupervised contact with a child, the elderly or persons with disabilities. In compliance with this directive, all adult catechists and helpers in our Faith Formation program have received a background check. In addition, all adult volunteers have read the **Code of Pastoral Conduct for Volunteers** and will also attend a 3-hour ***Protecting God's Children*** seminar. This seminar teaches about the warning signs of inappropriate relationships with children so they can identify potential abuse before it happens.

COMMUNICATION

The continued success and growth of any faith formation program depends a great deal on feedback from parents and participants. Therefore, parents and participants comments and suggestions are encouraged and welcome. Any correspondences to this effect should be sent to the Faith Formation Office (Attn: Tina Kovalcik, DRE) communicated directly via phone or in person.

All Early Childhood formation information can be found in this handbook. For specific information concerning events and special activities, please refer to the weekly Shrine Spotlight Faith Formation News section in the bulletin. Important information is usually sent home via your child. Be sure to check our parish bulletin for weekly updates at our web site: www.iccatholic.org.

STAFF

The catechists, assistants, helpers are volunteers who wish to be a companion on your child's faith journey. They participate in the various areas of faith formation because they are convinced of its importance. They give freely of their time and talent to support you in the lifelong mission of forming your children into the image and likeness of Christ. They deserve your utmost respect, consideration, and support at all times. If you have any questions or concerns about our parish program or its volunteers, please feel free to contact the Director at (586) 725-1762.



EARLY CHILDHOOD OCT. 12, – MAY 3, 2015 CALENDAR

**Early Childhood will meet weekly during the 10:00am Mass
except for:**

**December 28 (Christmas Break)
February 1 (School Open House)
April 5 (Easter)**

PRAYERS

SIGN OF THE CROSS – In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ANGEL OF GOD – Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here. Ever this day be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

GRACE BEFORE MEALS – Bless us O Lord, and these your gifts which we are about to receive from your bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER – I give to you, my God, this day, all I do, think, and say.

NIGHT PRAYER – God be with me as I sleep. Bless those who love and care for me. I love you, dear God. I know you love me, too.