

Church of the Holy Rosary

Faith Formation

Parent's Handbook

2025-2026

Dear Friends,

Do you remember the joyful day of your child's baptism? In that celebration they became a child of God and were initiated in the Catholic Church. It was also then that you were reminded that you are the first and best teachers of the faith to your children. Thank you for all you have done so far in sharing the love of God, the experience of prayer and the life of faith with your child.

Now as your children are older and growing in their awareness of the love that God has for them and the plan that He has for their lives, the experience of their religious formation widens and grows. The parish of the Church of the Holy Rosary recognizes the awesome responsibility that you have taken in your child's faith formation and we are here to support you in that task. We are very proud of our parish's Faith Formation programs. It is the hard work of both our staff and the families in the program that make it the wonderful program that it has become.

We are presenting you with this handbook that outlines how we can work together for the best spiritual formation of our children. It shows the course of studies for the regular program as well as the special preparations needed for the children about to receive Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. We ask that you read this handbook carefully as it outlines our hopes and expectations for our children's formation.

Thank you for loving your children enough to want to pass on your faith to them. Please feel free to call upon the staff of the Office of Faith Formation with any questions.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Jose A. Abalon

Rev. Jose A. Abalon
Pastor

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We want to extend our warmest welcome to you and your family, as you enroll in our parish faith formation program. We are aware of how precious your children are, and we thank you for entrusting us with their care by bringing them to our program.

We are here to share our faith and the love of Jesus with your children. Our catechists will work with them regularly and try to convey to them the message of the Gospels by word and example. However, it is important that you remember that your role as catechist at home is more important than our class time. Children will learn what they see and live every day, rather than what they hear. Therefore, we must work together to provide a strong faith-based foundation that your children can build their lives upon as they continue their faith journey into adulthood. Developing a strong faith and value system from early childhood is the best way to ensure that they will make sound decisions and have the tools they will need to handle life's challenges as they mature.

We look forward to working with you this coming year in order to help your children develop a better understanding of our Catholic way of life. We hope to provide you with resources that will enhance your parenting skills within the context of our Catholic Christian traditions. If you need any information or help during the year, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Faithfully in Christ,

Barbara L. Brady

Barbara Brady
Director of Religious Education
Church of the Holy Rosary

FAITH FORMATION OFFICE (CCD) CONTACT INFORMATION

Director of Religious Education: Barbara Brady
Mailing Address: 365 Undercliff Avenue, Edgewater, NJ 07020
Phone Number: (201) 945-6329
Fax Number: (201) 945-6599
E-mail: holyrosary@aol.com
Parish Website: holyrosaryedgewater.org
Please call for an appointment if you wish to discuss your child's needs.

PARISH CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor: Rev. Jose A. Abalon (holyrosary@aol.com)
Mailing Address: 365 Undercliff Avenue, Edgewater, NJ 07020
Phone Number: (201)945-6329
Fax Number: (201) 945-6599
E-mail: holyrosary@aol.com
Parish Website: holyrosaryedgewater.org

PARISH CENTER OFFICE HOURS

26 Edgewater Place, Edgewater, NJ 07020
Monday – Friday: 10:00am to 3:00pm

PARISH MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Evening: 5:30pm (English)
Sunday: 8:00am (English), 11:00am (English), and 12:30 (Spanish)

Weekdays: 8:00am (English)

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Confession)

Saturday, 3:00pm to 5:00pm and by appointment.

MISSION STATEMENT

We, the members of the Holy Rosary Parish family, are the living sign of Christ's Presence, reconciling life, light, hopefulness, and healing within our community. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we seek to realize the full potential of our creative energies to be about the work of God in our commitment to the Lord, each other, the Church and our world. We are a community sharing responsibility and celebration. We seek to reflect the love of Jesus in such a way that we burn with desire to be at one with Him. We pray that we are open to hear and understand the good news, while we reach out to those who have not heard it. We come together as one, sharing the Word, the Eucharist, and the Spirit which is our Gift from God.

OFFICE OF FAITH FORMATION MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Office of Faith Formation of the Church of the Holy Rosary, having answered a call to proclaim God's love by word and deed, serve and support parish households in their faith journey and development. We strive to reinforce the faith example set at home and to foster an intimate relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ in the heart of every member of our parish community. We aim to provide an environment where the faithful can explore and better understand the Catholic Christian faith and way of life. We hope to facilitate a process by which they can accept the challenge and call of Christ to daily discipleship.

OUR OBJECTIVES

We work to fulfill this mission in the following ways:

- ♣ By providing the practical resources and support that families need in order to foster the faith development of their children.
- ♣ By being attentive to the varied needs of the average modern-day family.
- ♣ By providing a healthy environment for young people to experience the love of Jesus and the Catholic faith.
- ♣ By supporting catechists in their own formation process so they may in turn provide quality Religious Education for our young people and families.
- ♣ By setting forth a curriculum that is comprehensive, age appropriate, and firmly grounded in Scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.
- ♣ By presenting this curriculum in a way that lovingly, relevantly, and effectively facilitates the learning and active participation of all those enrolled in our programs.
- ♣ By leading families through a process of sacrament preparation that will prepare the minds and hearts of candidates to experience God's grace.

2025 - 2026 Faith Formation Schedule: September – December 2025

All classes will be held in the Parish Center at 26 Edgewater Place beginning Sunday, September 14, 2025.

Children will be expected to gather in the Parish Center Chapel no later than 9:15am. Father Jose addresses the students promptly at 9:15am, and classes begin thereafter at 9:30am.

Classes conclude at 10:45am specifically so you can take your child/children to the 11:00am Mass.

DATE	CLASS (YES/NO)	COMMENTS (IF ANY)
Sept 14, 2025	YES	FIRST DAY OF CLASS
Sept 21	YES	
Sept. 28	YES	
Oct 5	YES	
Oct 12	NO	COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND
Oct 19	YES	
Oct 26	YES	
Nov 2	YES	
Nov 9	YES	
Nov 16	YES	
Nov 23	YES	
Nov 30	NO	THANKSGIVING WEEKEND
Dec 7	YES	
Dec 14	YES	ADVENT RECONCILIATION WITH FR. JOSE
Dec 21& Dec 28	NO	NO CLASS CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AT 5:30PM MASS ON DECEMBER 24TH. BEGINNING OF CHRISTMAS BREAK

2025--2026 Faith Formation Schedule: January – May 2026

DATE	CLASS (YES/NO)	COMMENTS (IF ANY)
Jan 4	YES	CLASS IN SESSION. FEAST OF THREE KINGS AFTER 8AM MASS
Jan 11	YES	
Jan 18	NO	MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. OBSERVANCE
Jan 25	YES	
Feb 1	YES	
Feb 8	YES	
Feb 15	NO	PRESIDENT'S DAY WEEKEND
Feb 22	YES	
Mar 1	YES	
Mar 8	YES	LENT RECONCILIATION WITH FR. JOSE
Mar 15	YES	
Mar 22	YES	
Mar 29	YES	Class in Session; Palm Sunday
Apr 5	NO	EASTER SUNDAY
Apr 12	YES	
Apr 19	YES	
Apr 26	YES	
May 3	YES	FHC & May Crowning
May 10	NO	MOTHER'S DAY
May 17	YES	LAST DAY OF CLASS
May 31	NO	NO CLASS: CONFIRMATION CEREMONY

Additional Dates to Note:

Ash Wednesday (beginning of Lent): February 18

First Holy Reconciliation and Rehearsal : May 2

First Holy Communion: May 3

Confirmation Retreat with Reconciliation: May 16

Confirmation with Bishop Michael Saporito: May 31

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

We are here to serve the faith formation and development needs of our children, youth and adults. In order for us to achieve that goal, effective communication is necessary.

Important Reminder: It is important that our records be as accurate as possible. Please remember to contact our office if you should change your phone, address or e-mail information.

We protect your privacy by not distributing your contact information to any other organization. If you have an email address that you check regularly, please be sure to provide that to us. Email is used for important reminders and announcements (e.g. parent meeting reminders and last minute class cancellations).

If you have any questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to share them with our office. You may contact us by mail, fax, phone or e-mail as indicated in this handbook. We also encourage you schedule an in-person appointment to discuss any concerns or questions.

We will contact you and send you information using a variety of methods.

- ♣ We may contact you by phone and/or e-mail and/or text messages with IMPORTANT reminders and announcements, including class cancellations.
- ♣ We will often send home notices with your children. **Ask them regularly if they have any information for you.**
- ♣ We have a Faith Formation section in the parish bulletin that is updated weekly. Please take one every week before you leave Mass and refer to it.
- ♣ Our Parish Website is kept up to date with links to all program calendars and important forms.
- ♣ Information may be mailed to your home by first class or bulk mail. Please be sure to read all mail carefully and promptly since material may be time sensitive.

MASS ATTENDANCE

"The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch ,but also in communion and intimacy, with Jesus Christ."

Our curriculum is always presented within the context of the liturgical year. Children and families learn primarily about the faith by worshiping together, fully engaging in the prayer of the Church throughout the year and participating in parish life. Our regular religious education sessions are intended to complement, not substitute for regular Mass attendance.

All families registered in our program are expected to attend Mass regularly. Since it is such an integral part of our program, children may be asked about Mass attendance and the Sunday Scripture readings are often a part of their lesson. Weekly Mass attendance will help your child to participate fully in and class.

PLAN AHEAD: We find that the most effective strategy in successfully getting your family to Mass every week is to plan your weekend schedule ahead of time. Perhaps on Friday evening, as you look at your weekend activities, be sure to set Mass attendance as a priority, review the Mass times at the Church of the Holy Rosary (and neighboring parishes if necessary) then determine together what Mass you will attend.

If you are having difficulty finding time to attend Mass regularly it may be a good time to take a closer look at your family's activities and to prayerfully discern adjusting that schedule in order to ensure that regular participation at Mass is possible.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Our Curriculum is intended to provide children and their families with knowledge of the teachings of our faith based on Scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Every year children and families will learn about the seven major themes of faith:

- ♣ Revelation – How does God reveal himself to us through Scripture, the Church, and our daily lives?
- ♣ Trinity – How does the mystery of God; Father, Son and Spirit live in us and challenge us to discipleship?
- ♣ Jesus Christ – Who is Jesus, why did He come among us, and how can I develop a relationship with Him?
- ♣ The Church – What is the Body of Christ and how is each person a member of the Body?
- ♣ Morality – What are God’s laws of love and how can we follow them more faithfully?
- ♣ Sacraments – How does the church worship and how does God’s grace fill us in the sacraments?
- ♣ The Kingdom of God – What is the Kingdom of God and how can we work for justice and peace?

These themes are presented every year in a manner that is appropriate to each grade level. Therefore children continue to develop the themes and build upon previous knowledge. For this reason it is important that children participate in our program every year, particularly the years between First Eucharist and Confirmation.

Faith formation is a lifelong process!

GRADE LEVEL

Parents may find that their child's grade level in CCD is different from their grade level in "regular" school. The CCD grade level for your child is determined by (1) your child's age; and (2) which of the Sacraments they have completed or are in need of. For example, a fourth grade student may be placed in the second grade class if the child had no prior CCD education and had not received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. Any questions, please see the Faith Formation Director.

ATTENDANCE

The classroom calendar is contained in this handbook. HOWEVER, since class dates may change unexpectedly, parents are requested to rely on the calendar under the "Religious Education" tab on our website (holyrosaryedgewater.org.)

Attendance will be monitored carefully. Ideally, students should only miss a class for illness or an emergency (not sporting events or similar events).

If a child misses 3 or more classes over the course of one school year, they MAY be deemed unprepared for promotion to the next grade level and may be required to repeat the year.

BOOKS

Books are given to children on the first day of classes.

If a student loses a book he/she must purchase one at an additional cost.

Children generally will be taking their books home since they often be assigned homework.

All children are expected to always bring their books to class.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM STUDENTS

1. Respectfully LISTEN.
2. Participate in all classroom discussions, volunteer to answer questions, and be ready when called upon to participate.
3. Complete all homework assignments (including chapter readings) given by their teachers.
4. Behave in a Christian manner at all times showing respect and being cooperative with adults and other students.
5. Attend classes regularly.
6. Bring all required materials.
7. Dress appropriately and respect their own bodies by dressing modestly.
8. Respect others' property and school property.
9. Not eat or drink in the classroom

Students who fail to participate in a meaningful way, or who do not complete the majority of homework assignments, MAY be deemed unprepared for promotion to the next grade level and may be required to repeat the year.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM PARENTS

1. Be an active part of their children's learning and the primary example of faith and discipleship for their children.
2. To provide for their child's regular participation at weekly Mass.
3. To provide for their child's regular attendance and punctuality for class.
4. To contact the Faith Formation office if their child is unable to attend a session.
5. To complete all home assignments with their child.
6. To talk with their child about what he/she learned at sessions and review homework assignments when applicable.
7. Communicate any special needs or circumstances that may affect their child within the classroom.
8. Communicate any concerns, questions, or suggestions.
9. To pray with their child at home.
10. Attend any parent/teacher conferences, sacrament preparation meetings, etc.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

We appreciate your cooperation in following these guidelines in order to keep your children safe.

1. Students gather in the Parish Center Chapel (26 Edgewater Place) no later than 9:15am.
2. Classes start promptly at 9:30am.
3. Students will be taken by their catechist, to their classroom, together as a group. **No student is permitted to enter (or remain) in a classroom unless the catechist is present.**
4. The inside door of the Parish Center always remain locked. This is done for the safety of the children in order to prevent strangers from entering the building.
5. Parents and students are required to check-in with Dr. Jeanette Martucci at the reception desk upon entering and leaving the premises.
6. Please be prompt in picking up your children. This demonstrates your consideration of our catechists and support staff.
7. Parents are expected to pick up their children UNLESS the Parish has previously received your written authorization that your child can walk home unattended.
8. Repeated tardiness in picking up a child may result in a parent conference.
9. No student may leave the school building before the regular dismissal time unless excused by Dr. Martucci or the Program Coordinator. This must be accomplished by sending in a note from the parent/guardian stating the reason for the need of an early dismissal.

HEALTH CONCERNS AND MEDICATIONS

1. If your child has health issues or special needs, it is important that you accurately listed same on your child's registration form.
2. Please remember to keep the office informed of any changes to your child's health or any new diagnoses made during the year.
3. Please be sure to indicate any allergies at the time of registration and to inform the office of any changes during the year.
4. If you haven't already done so, please inform the Faith Formation Office if your child needs to bring emergency medications to class (e.g. Epi-pen, emergency inhaler, etc.)
5. We will not dispense medication of any kind. If your child is taking any type of medication that needs to be given during Faith Formation hours, a parent must be present.

If your child is displaying symptoms of an illness, please keep your child home.

CELL PHONE USE

1. No student is permitted to use a cell phone while in session.
2. Parents needing to contact their children must contact the office at 201-945-6599.
3. If a student uses a cell phone while in session, the following procedure will be followed:
 - a. 1st warning: Student will be asked to put the phone away.
 - b. 2nd warning: Catechist will take and hold the phone until the end of the session.
 - c. 3rd warning: Catechist will take the phone and turn it in to the Faith Formation office. The phone will be held at the office until a parent comes to pick it up.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

All students are expected to share in the faith learning experience of the parish program. They do so by meeting the expectations previously outlined to the best of their ability. We want the children in our program to experience the Gospel values at all times.

Therefore, if a child's behavior disrupts the learning process for him or herself or for others, the following steps will be taken:

- At the first incident a verbal warning will be given by the catechist and the child will be reminded of the expectations.
- At the second incident the student will be sent to the office for a discussion with the Director.
- At the third incident the child is removed from the class and the parents are contacted.

All efforts will be made to work with the child and the family in order to resolve the issue in the most effective way possible. However, if the problem persists and cooperation is not evident by the child or parent, we reserve the right to remove the child from our regularly scheduled sessions.

This is another reason why consistent communication with our office regarding special needs or special family circumstances is important. Often these situations can impact a child's behavior. In order to best address your child's needs we hope to be well informed and any information you can give us is helpful to our catechists.

We appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Persistent problems with discipline may also impact the readiness of a child preparing for a sacrament. In that case, a parent conference may be necessary.

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK POLICIES ON SACRAMENTS

FIRST HOLY RECONCILIATION: Students must participate in the Sacrament of First Reconciliation before they receive First Holy Communion. Children must have attended faith formation sessions for at least one full catechetical year prior to their preparation for the sacrament.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION: A minimum of two full consecutive years of general catechesis/Faith Formation/CCD is required in order to receive First Communion. In addition to this, children and their families take part in any Parish sacrament preparation program.

CONFIRMATION: A minimum of two full consecutive years of general catechesis/Faith Formation/CCD is required in order to receive Confirmation. In addition to this, children and their families take part in any Parish sacrament preparation program.

Ideally, to receive Confirmation the child should attend Faith Formation sessions every year from the time he/she celebrates First Communion until Confirmation. **Failing to attend classes in the years after the celebration of First Communion will result in a significant delay in the preparation for Confirmation.**

Transcripts will be required for children transferring from another parish or Catholic school.

Please note that we follow the archdiocesan policies and requirements for sacrament preparation. If a child is enrolled in our program after the second week of classes, that may not be considered a full year of faith formation. This will be taken into consideration when reviewing the child's faith formation record in determining their eligibility for sacrament preparation. A full year of formation will be noted for new parishioners who enroll their children after the second week of classes and can verify that they have been attending religious education classes in their former parish. In these cases a transcript will be required.

CALL FOR CATECHISTS

If you feel God calling you to this ministry please contact the Faith Formation Office to set up a meeting with the director. At that time you will be provided with an application and a more detailed explanation of responsibilities and expectations. Together we can explore your interests, gifts and skills and how they can line up with the needs of our various programs. Many of our catechists have no teaching experience. But, driven by their desire to witness Christ and to pass on the faith to our young people and with the training provided, they have developed into excellent catechists. Do not hesitate and do not fear. If God calls to this ministry, there will be an opportunity for you to serve and God will provide you with the gifts you need to do so well.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

The Church of the Holy Rosary has a zero tolerance policy regarding abuse of any kind.

All catechists and volunteers have:

- Completed a thorough Volunteer Application.
- Had an interview with the director or the program coordinator.
- Undergone a criminal background check.
- Read and Signed the "Archdiocese of Newark Policies on Professional & Ministerial Conduct."
- Attended a special workshop on child abuse prevention entitled "Protecting God's Children."

All certificates and records of compliance are on file in our office and a record is kept at the chancery.

No child is allowed to be in an unsupervised, one-to-one situation with any staff or volunteer in a remote or unobserved area. EVERYONE'S cooperation is needed in order to ensure a safe environment for our children. Any parent who suspects any type of abuse should notify the proper authorities directly. Parents should also notify the Director immediately. The Director will notify the pastor and will also notify the proper authorities, if parents have not done so already. Pursuant to state law, we are required to report suspected child abuse, and we will also follow diocesan policy on such matters.

The policy of abuse for the Archdiocese of Newark is available for anyone who wishes to review it. Please visit the Archdiocesan website at www.rcan.org to view the policies or contact our office if you do not have access to the internet.