



Church of the Nativity

SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Faith Formation Program Welcome Packet
2026 – 2027

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Welcome to the Nativity School of Religion 2026-2027 School Year

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome Back! Or, if you're new to the School of Religion . . . Welcome! Whether you are a returning family or new to our program, we warmly welcome you and look forward to walking this journey of faith together.

The mission at Nativity is to nurture and strengthen the Catholic faith in our children by helping them grow in knowledge, deepen their relationship with Christ, and develop a strong sense of Christian community. Through engaging lessons, sacramental preparation, prayer, and service, our program aims to support both students and families in living out their faith more fully.

The dedicated catechists and staff of the School of Religion have prepared a curriculum that reflects the teachings of the Church while making learning both meaningful and enjoyable. Parents, we recognize you as the primary educators in your children's faith lives, and we are here to support you in this important role. We encourage your active participation and welcome your presence at events and liturgies throughout the year.

Be sure to review everything attached. I am also happy to send it to you as a google doc if you'd prefer. Regular communication will be provided to keep you informed about classroom updates, special events, and any schedule changes.

We are grateful to share this faith journey with you and your children. May this year be one of grace, growth, and a deeper encounter with God's love.

In Christ's peace,

Noreen Browning

Director of Religious Education

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The ABCs of the Nativity School of Religion Faith Formation Program

Attendance

All students must attend 80% of the scheduled classes and all retreats (if applicable) to meet the Archdiocesan requirement for attendance. A student is considered “Tardy” if they are more than 10 minutes late. 3 tardies = 1 absence.

Behavioral Expectations

All students are expected to arrive on time and dressed appropriately. Students must show respect for the teacher, the classroom, all materials used and each other. Consistent disruption in class or while on Retreat or violation of our respect clause will result in a meeting with the parent and the DRE to discuss options.

Confirmation

Confirmation celebrates the entry of the Holy Spirit into the life of the community by its new fully initiated members. In the Catholic Catechism for Adults, “Confirmation deepens our baptismal life that calls us to be missionary witnesses of Jesus Christ in our families, neighborhoods, society, and the world. Through Confirmation, our personal relationship with Christ is strengthened.”

More specific information on the Confirmation Retreat and Confirmation will be sent home with your student as we get closer to the dates. For further information on our Confirmation Preparation Program, please refer to the “Curriculum” section below.

Curriculum

The Nativity Parish Faith Formation Program for children is broken into age groups. The Archdiocesan approved Pflaum Publishing Program is used in all our Sunday School classes.

First Eucharist is a 2-year program culminating in the celebration of the Sacrament in the Spring of year 2. In **grades 1 – 2** the focus is on **First Eucharist Preparation including First Reconciliation**. The textbook used in 1st grade is *“Promise: What the church believes and teaches.”* The Sacramental Preparation series for grade 2 is two parts. *“Together in Jesus: First Reconciliation and Together in Jesus: First Eucharist.”* 2nd grade students will also participate in a First Reconciliation Retreat and Service as well as a First Eucharist Retreat and MASS. Both retreats, the Reconciliation Service and First Eucharist are done with the 2nd grade students from Nativity Elementary School emphasizing our relationship through God and church.

Grade 3 – 6 the curriculum focus is on Standard Faith Formation. The textbook for grades 3-4 is *“Good News for Children.”* The texts used in grades 5 – 6 are from *“Venture: What the Church*

believes and teaches.” Both textbooks include units that feature age-appropriate text and activities on, “We are the Church,” “We prepare for Jesus’ coming,” “We Follow Jesus,” and “We Remember Jesus’ Death and Resurrection.”

Confirmation Preparation is the focus of the classes for **grades 7+**. The classes use the Pflaum series, *“Visions: What the Church believes and teaches”* and emphasizes social justice, moral reasoning, and service for junior-high students. Confirmation is a 2-year program that includes a 2nd year retreat at Vallombrosa with the students at Nativity School emphasizing the strong relationship between Nativity School and the School of Religion.

The curriculum in all classrooms is supplemented with teacher-created materials, hands-on projects, and seasonal activities following the liturgical calendar of the Catholic church.

Dress

Students must dress appropriately each day. Clothing must be modest in nature and inoffensive. T-shirts or sweaters that have printed materials on them should be in keeping with a Christian learning environment. Some examples of dress that are inappropriate include: pajamas of any kind (pants, shorts, etc.), bare midriffs, bike shorts, low cut shirts, short shorts, short skirts, and low-rise jeans or jeans with tears in them. In the interest of safety, children are not allowed to wear flip-flops or sandals without backs.

Fees

The non-refundable fee for all materials at the School of Religion is \$100 per child due on the first day of school. No other fees will be collected. No one will be denied faith formation for financial reasons. Please reach out if you would like to make other arrangements. Accepted payment methods: cash, check or via Cheddar-up (a QR-Code will be available on the first day of classes).

First Eucharist/First Holy Communion

First Eucharist celebrates the second Sacrament of Initiation into the Catholic Church. (Baptism, First Eucharist, Confirmation) It is a two-year program that traditionally begins in 1st grade and culminates in the Sacrament being received in the Spring of year 2. More specific information on the First Eucharist Retreat and First Eucharist will be sent home with your student as we get closer to the dates. For further information on our Program, please refer to the “Curriculum” section above.

Homework

Students in grades 1-4 are asked to know standard prayers including the: Sign of the Cross, Glory Be, Hail Mary, Our Father, Act of Contrition, Guardian Angel Prayer, and Grace before Meals. In

addition to these, students in grades 5-8 are asked to know the: Rosary, Prayer of St. Francis, Prayer to the Holy Spirit. They will study them in class and are asked to study them at home. No additional homework will be given.

Registration

All registration paperwork and the fee are due on the first day of class. The Registration Form is available in multiple formats including printed (found in the church lobby), as a .pdf file or as a google doc. Please reach out if you'd like an alternate format!

Retreats

There are mandatory retreats for 1st Reconciliation, 1st Eucharist and Confirmation.

All 1st Eucharist students from Nativity School and the Nativity School of Religion have a Reconciliation Retreat prior to Reconciliation and a 1st Eucharist Retreat before 1st Holy Communion.

The **1st Reconciliation Retreat** is scheduled for **Saturday, November 7th, 2026**, from 9 -11:00 a.m. at Nativity School followed immediately by Reconciliation in our church at 11:00 a.m.

The **1st Eucharist Retreat** is on **Saturday, March 13, 2027**, from 9 – 11:00 a.m. at Nativity School.

All Confirmands from Nativity School and the School of Religion will have a **Confirmation Retreat on Saturday, March 20, 2027**, from 11 – 4:30. This is an all-day retreat that ends with 5:00 MASS at our church.

More detailed information will be sent home with your student as we get closer to the dates.

School Hours

All Faith Formation Classes, grades 1 – 6, will be held on Sundays from 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Please pick your child up by 9:00 a.m. outside of Nativity School and then please meet us at the 9:30 MASS! See the calendar for the specific dates.

Our first Sunday School class will be on Sunday, August 23rd at 8:00 a.m. at Nativity School. Students should be dropped off at the front of the school (on Laurel) and enter through the double-doors. I will be waiting in the front of the school to check your child in.

Confirmation Classes will be held on Wednesdays in the O'Hare Center from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. **The first Confirmation Prep class will be on Wednesday, August 26th at 7:00 p.m. in the O'Hare Center.** Doors will open at 6:50. Please be sure to pick your student up no later than 8:10 p.m.

Every effort will be made to schedule Sunday school classes and Confirmation Prep classes in the same weeks. The Confirmation Class schedule will be released during the middle of June.

Special Events

Participation in the **Nativity Church Christmas Eve Children's MASS** is open to all students from Nativity School and the School of Religion. It is a beautiful opportunity for our students and families to come together and celebrate the birth of our Lord in word and song. Parish volunteer hours are given to all Confirmands who help. More information will be provided closer to Christmas.

On **January 10th**, we will have the **Rite of Enrollment MASS for our Confirmands**. During the 9:30 MASS, our Confirmands will sign the Nativity Book of the Elect (or Book of Enrollment) where candidates publicly declare their desire to be confirmed. More detailed information will be sent home with your student as we get closer to the dates.

Volunteer Hours

We welcome your help! Interested persons should email me for the Volunteer Packet. Volunteer opportunities include our retreats on Saturday, November 7th and Saturday, March 13th. Only those who complete the Volunteer Packet are allowed on campus for any extended period and will be allowed inside the classroom.

Thank you and Welcome

Thanks to the diligent efforts of dedicated teachers, the Nativity School of Religion has been thriving for over 15 years. I am deeply grateful to Very Rev. Father Doherty, Mrs. Lyra Maceda, the dedicated teaching staff and our many parent volunteers, whose support is essential to our success. This year, we are pleased to welcome new teachers from Nativity School, as well as friends from St. Patrick's Seminary.

ATTACHMENTS

Nativity School of Religion Calendar of Events

v 05.04.26

Date	Theme	Event	Time	Attendance
August 23rd	Sunday School		8:00	
September 13th	Sunday School		8:00	
September 20th	Sunday School		8:00	
October 4th	Sunday School		8:00	
October 18th	Sunday School		8:00	
November 1st	Sunday School		8:00	
November 7th	1st Reconciliation	Retreat & Reconciliation	9:00 - 10:30 10:30	1st Eucharist Sac. Prep Students ONLY
November 15th	Sunday School		8:00	
December 6th	Sunday School		8:00	
December 13th	Sunday School		8:00	
December 24th	Christmas Eve MASS*	MASS & Pageant*	4:30	Any student*
January 10th	Sunday School		8:00	
January 10th Baptism of the Lord	Rite of Enrollment MASS	MASS	9:30	Conf. Prep Students ONLY
January 24th	Sunday School		8:00	
February 7th	Sunday School		8:00	
February 21st	Sunday School		8:00	
March 7th	Sunday School		8:00	
March 13th	1st Eucharist	Retreat & Practice	9:00 - 10:30 10:30 - 11:00	1st Eucharist Prep Students ONLY
March 20th	Confirmation Retreat (& Palm Sunday Mass)	Retreat, Penance & MASS	11:00 - 4:30 5:00	Conf. Prep Students ONLY
April 10th	1st Eucharist	MASS	10:00	1st Eucharist Prep Students ONLY
April 11h	MASS	MASS	9:30	1st Eucharist Students may wear their dress-up clothes and will sit in the front of the church!
Apr. 18, 24, or 25	Confirmation	MASS	2:30	Conf. Prep Students ONLY

*Students in grades 5+ get service hours if they volunteer to help at the MASS



CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY SCHOOL OF RELIGION

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Menlo Park
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CLASS REGISTRATION FORM FOR 2026-2027

Please note that all areas must be completed. **One form PER CHILD.** Please return this form along with the \$100 per child fee on the first day of class. Payment may be made via check, cash or using Cheddar-up—a QR code will be provided on the first day of classes. Please email nbrowning@nativityschool.com with questions.

FAMILY INFORMATION

CHILD'S **FIRST** NAME

CHILD'S **LAST** NAME

FAMILY ADDRESS/STREET

CITY

ZIP

MOTHER'S FIRST NAME

MOTHER'S LAST NAME

FATHER'S FIRST NAME

FATHER'S LAST NAME

MOTHER'S CELL NUMBER

FATHER'S CELL NUMBER

MOTHER'S RELIGION

FATHER'S RELIGION

MOTHER'S OCCUPATION

FATHER'S OCCUPATION

PRIMARY EMAIL

SECONDARY EMAIL

CHILD LIVES PRIMARILY WITH (please check one)

☐ Both Parents in same household ☐ Mom ☐ Dad ☐ Other

MARITAL STATUS (please check one)

☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed ☐ Single

CHILD'S INFORMATION

CHILD'S DATE OF BIRTH

Day Month Year

CHILD'S SCHOOL & GRADE IN SEPTEMBER 2026

School Grade

ALLERGIES, LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS, PHYSICAL ACCOMMODATIONS, ETC.

☐ Yes (Please explain) _____
☐ No

PRIOR SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION CLASSES

☐ No

☐ Yes

○ At Nativity Parish (explain ***what*** & ***when***)

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○ At _____ Parish (explain ***what*** & ***when***)

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FAITH FORMATION CLASSES AND/OR SACRAMENTS COMPLETED

☐ No

☐ Yes

○ At Nativity Parish (explain ***what*** & ***when***)

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○ Baptism (date of completion and where)

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○ First Reconciliation (date of completion & where)

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○ First Eucharist (date of completion & where)

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PERMISSIONS AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

- 1) I give my permission for my child to have photos and/or videos taken of them to be used by the Church of the Nativity, Nativity School, and/or Nativity School of Religion in communications channels and in submissions to media outlets? (More information can be found in the ABCs of the Faith Formation Program.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

2) My child is in good health and I assume all responsibility. In the event of an emergency and I cannot be reached, I hereby give permission to transport my child to a hospital or medical facility and to seek medical attention.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3) I am aware that I will be called if my child breaks any of the rules and must be sent home. I agree on behalf of myself, my child(ren) named herein, our heirs, successors, and assigned, to hold harmless and defend the Archdiocese of San Francisco, Church of the Nativity, Nativity School and the Nativity School of Religion, its officers, directors, employees, volunteers, and any representatives associated with the Faith Formation program from any and all liability claims, loss or damage arising from or in connection with my child(ren) attending any and all Faith Formation events including but not limited to classes, retreats and/or MASS attendance or in connection with any illness or injury or cost of medical treatment in connection.

☐ Yes, I am aware and have read the behavior guidelines

4) I agree to pick my child(ren) on time after all events. I am aware that it is my responsibility to provide/arrange timely transportation to and from all Faith Formation events for my child(ren).

☐ I will make every effort to collect my child(ren) on time after every event.

5) I understand that all volunteers must be fingerprinted (fee will be reimbursed) and take the 90-minute VIRTUS training. (More information can be found in the ABCs of the Faith Formation Program.)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6) I understand the fee for the School of Religion is \$100 and is due on the first day of class. (More information can be found in the ABCs of the Faith Formation Program under "fee.")

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

☐ I have read and understand the ABCs of our Faith Formation program

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Relationship to child: _____