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September 18, 2011

Dear Friends in Christ:

They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with the Lord and added to their numbers those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47)

This portion of Acts reminds us of why we gather this year.

“To hand on what we ourselves have received”..... to a most precious gift.....our children.

Blessings & peace upon your hearts and your homes.

I am proud to walk with you.

Remember our devoted catechists in your prayers.

Sincerely,

Father J. Duane Gavitt

## FAITH FORMATION SCHEDULE 2011 – 2012

<b>S E P T</b>	4	11	Catechetical Sunday Opening Liturgy 10:30 AM 18	<b>FIRST CLASS</b>  25	
<b>O C T</b>	CLASS  2	CLASS  9	CLASS Fire Drill 9:40 AM 16	CLASS  23	CLASS  30
<b>N O V</b>	CLASS  6	CLASS  13	CLASS  20	Thanksgiving  <b>NO CLASS</b> 27	
<b>D E C</b>	CLASS  4	CLASS  11	CLASS  18	Christmas  <b>NO CLASS</b> 25	
<b>J A N</b>	New Year's  <b>NO CLASS</b> 1	CLASS  8	CLASS  15	CLASS  22	CLASS First Eucharist Class Parents' Meeting OLIC Church 6:00 PM 29
<b>F E B</b>	CLASS  5	CLASS  12	President's Day  <b>NO CLASS</b> 19	CLASS First Reconciliation Parents' Meeting 6:00 PM 26	
<b>M A R</b>	CLASS  4	CLASS  11	CLASS  18	First Reconciliation 6:00 PM 21	CLASS First Eucharist Parents' Meeting 6:00 PM 25
<b>A P R</b>	<b>PALM SUNDAY</b> All Students will participate in the 10:30 AM Mass  CLASS 1	Easter  <b>NO Class</b> 8	CLASS Blessing Cup Meal Parish Hall 5:00 PM 15	CLASS  22	<b>LAST CLASS</b> Closing Liturgy 10:30 AM 29
<b>M A Y</b>	Prayer Vigil Service 7:00 PM OLIC Church 4	FIRST EUCARIST 10:30 AM 6			

**FAITH FORMATION SCHEDULE 2011 - 2012**  
**IMPORTANT DATES**

- September 18, 2011      Catechetical Sunday
- Beginning the catechetical activities for the year – all students, teachers, aides and parents are to attend an orientation at 9:45 AM in Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish.
- At 10:30 AM students, teachers, aides and parents are to attend the opening Liturgy in Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish.
- September 25, 2011      First day of class. Time: 9:15 AM to 10:15 AM. All classes will be held at the Faith Formation Center. If necessary, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish's Lower Level will be used for classes.
- October 16, 2011      FIRE DRILL- 9:40 AM – Faith Formation Center
- January 29, 2011      FIRST EUCHARIST CLASS PARENT'S MEETING, OLIC Church, 6:00 PM
- February 26, 2012      FIRST RECONCILIATION MEETING – Parents only 6:00 PM
- March 21, 2012      FIRST RECONCILIATION – 6:00 PM – Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish
- March 25, 2012      FIRST EUCHARIST MEETING – Parents only 6:00 PM
- April 1, 2012      PALM SUNDAY – All Faith Formation Students will participate in Palm Sunday Services at 10:30 AM Mass – Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish
- April 15, 2012      BLESSING CUP MEAL – 5:00 PM – Parish Center
- April 29, 2012      CLOSING LITURGY – Following Faith Formation Classes, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish
- May 4 , 2012      PRAYER VIGIL SERVICE - 7:00 PM – Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish
- May 6, 2012      FIRST EUCHARIST – 10:30 AM – Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish

## ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION:

Diocesan regulations states that there must be two years of preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation. The diocese further states that it is the responsibility of the parish to provide parents sessions/retreats for each of these sacramental preparation programs. These enable us to communicate important practical information and to receive parental input. The sessions also provide the opportunity for parents to reflect upon their own understanding and appreciation of the sacrament as well as to explore some ways that parents nurture the faith development of their children.

Sacramental reception takes place in the context of the parish community. Because of this communal aspect, Catholic School students join Faith Formation classes for several sessions before the reception of the sacraments within their parish.

### RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF CHILDREN (RCIC)

As with the adult catechumenate (RCIA - its model), the children's catechumen is a process marked by stages, depending on the development of the child. This process could be tailored for each individual child, employing specifically designed material and proceedings, adjusted to the pace of each child.

According to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Church policy, a child over seven years of age, who did not receive the Sacraments of Baptism or Eucharist, must attend Faith Formation classes for one year prior to RCIC. The Faith Formation class grade level of the child will be determined together with the Pastor, coordinator, and the parents. After one year of Faith Formation classes, the child must then enter the RCIC process in September. While in the RCIC process, the child must also continue to attend Faith Formation classes every Sunday.

Upon the final decision of the Pastor, the child will then receive the Sacraments of Initiation - Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, at the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil Liturgy.

### REGISTRATION:

All students must register for classes using the "Student Information Form".

The "Student Information Form" will be available in the office, or online at [www.ourladyfreeland.org](http://www.ourladyfreeland.org). All students must be registered before the start of classes.

**Every family is required to pay a yearly registration fee of \$20.** Registration Fees are payable on or before September 25, 2011. After that date a \$10 late payment fee will be added to the \$20 for a total of \$30. This is a small token of the actual cost of your child in this program. If this is a hardship, please contact the church office or coordinator.

## ATTENDANCE

### MASS ATTENDANCE:

Participation at Sunday Liturgy and on Holy Days of Obligation (Solemnity of Mary, January 1; Ascension, forty days after Easter; Assumption of Mary, August 15; All Saints Day, November 1; Immaculate Conception, December 8; and Christmas, December 25) is an obligation of all Catholics. Your child will learn Liturgy, if you accompany him/her to Mass. Children learn best through example.

### ABSENTEEISM:

Children are expected to attend class every week. If a child is absent from classes, a written valid excuse, from the parent, is required for every class missed. Teachers will hand in absent children's names and their excuses to the coordinators who will keep documents. They will follow through on problems. Consistent absenteeism may result in a child repeating a grade. You can report your child's absence by calling the Faith Formation Center the day of class between 8:30 AM and 9:15 AM at 636-3698.

### ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL OF CLASSES:

Since we have one hour per week to guide our students in the Catholic faith, PROMPTNESS is important. Late arrivals are disruptive to teachers and classmates alike. PLEASE BE ON TIME. Children will not be left unattended in a classroom. Adult supervision is required at all times.

If a child is late for class, he/she will report to the coordinator. The child will then be taken to his/her classroom by the coordinator.

Parents are NOT ALLOWED in the buildings (Faith Formation Center of ICC during class hrs. before or after). Teachers and Aides must have State Police AND Child Abuse Clearances, before they can volunteer their services. Clearances will be filed in the ICC office.

NO ONE will be dismissed early from class unless the parents have sent a note with the child to be given to the teacher. The coordinator will be informed and if the teacher does not have an aide to escort the child, the coordinator will accompany the child to meet the parent(s) or other designated adult at the front door of the Faith Formation Center.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER:

Weather cancellations will be posted on Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish website [www.ourladyfreeland.org](http://www.ourladyfreeland.org).

### ILLNESS/ACCIDENT PROCEDURE:

If a child becomes ill or is injured during Faith Formation class, every effort will be made to contact a parent/guardian. If this is not possible, the adult(s) designated on the "Emergency Information Form," provided to each student on the first day of class, will be contacted. No child will be permitted to leave, unless accompanied by a parent or an adult authorized by the parent.

## HOMEWORK

Our teachers are concerned because the children do not know their prayers from year to year. Please encourage your child to pray. All children from first grade up should know the: Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be. Each class will add to these prayers by using the Prayer Sheets (Primary, Intermediate, Junior High, Senior High) and the Office of Religious Education Elementary Guidelines.

## TRANSPORTATION

### DROPOFF/PICK UP PROCEDURE:

When children are dropped off at the Faith Formation Center, crossing guards are available to assist in allowing the children to cross the street to the sidewalk safely and to direct the flow of traffic. HOWEVER, BLOCKING THE EMERGENCY VEHICLES (FIRE TRUCKS AND AMBULANCE) EXIT FROM THE BOROUGH BUILDING IS PROHIBITED. PARENTS ARE ASKED TO KEEP THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC MOVING AND IF NECESSARY, TO PARK THEIR VEHICLE AND WALK THEIR CHILD TO THE FAITH FORMATION CENTER.

When picking students up at the Faith Formation Center parents are to park their cars in the parking lots and wait for their children on the sidewalk outside the facilities.

## ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

The possession or use of electronic equipment is prohibited. Students will not be allowed to take electronics into the classrooms. This includes cell phones, iPods, game boys, etc. A landline is available in the event the DRE, teacher or students needs to contact a parent. Any child in possession of electronic equipment will be required to leave it at the DRE's office until class is over.

## SAFETY REGULATIONS

The following safety rules will be adhered to for the protection of the students:

1. Students are to sit in chairs correctly during class.
2. Students are not to leave the class without permission.
3. Students are to refrain from physical and verbal abusive behavior.

Classroom rules will be formalized by the teacher and students at the beginning of the Faith Formation year and posted in each classroom. When a conflict occurs, every effort will be made by the teacher and/or coordinator to resolve the problem. If necessary, the child will meet with the Pastor.

## FIRE DRILLS

Fire Drills will be conducted periodically throughout the year at the Faith Formation Center under the guidance of the Freeland Fire Department.

## FIELD TRIPS:

At times field trips are part of our educational program. A permission slip giving details of the trip will be mailed to the parents in advance of the planned trip. The slip must be returned to the child's Faith Formation teacher by the parent/guardian, on or before the deadline date. No student will be permitted to go on the trip without written parental consent.

It is the duty of the Pastor, coordinator, and teacher to make the trip as safe as possible. For this reason, a student who does not obey Faith Formation rules will not be permitted to go on the trip.

#### MEDICATION PROCEDURE:

If a child is on medication, the medication is to be dispensed by the parent before or after Faith Formation class.

If it is necessary on a field trip, a written note signed by the parent and physician (if prescription) designating the coordinator to administer said medication, type, and amount is required. Medication must be given to the coordinator before the start of a field trip by the parent.

At no time, may any student keep medication of any kind, including aspirin, in his/her possession. Cough drops and lozenges are included under the medication policy.

#### DISCIPLINE

Conduct unbecoming and/or detrimental to the reputation of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish will not be tolerated. If a child disrupts a class (see Safety Regulations) he/she will be sent to the coordinator. If this type of behavior becomes habitual, the child will meet with the Pastor. Unruly children will not be tolerated and will not be able to participate in church fun activities (sports, trips, etc.).

#### COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Parents are notified of Faith Formation activities through the use of the Parent/Student Handbook, Parish Bulletin, and Newspaper. Throughout the Faith Formation year, correspondence is sent home or mailed to the parents on various scheduled events - Sacramental Preparation, Retreats, Parties, etc.

#### MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORT:

A Mid-Term Progress Report is completed by the student's Faith Formation Teacher and sent home with the student on the third Sunday of January. Mid-Term Progress Reports are to be reviewed by the parents, signed, and returned to the child's Faith Formation Teacher.

## YOUTH GROUP

### JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP:

Our parish has a Jr. Youth Group comprised of students in seventh and eighth grades. All students are welcome. A monthly calendar is prepared by the Pastor and the Youth Advisory Board which includes social and service activities. Some activities are Nursing Home Visitations, Roller Skating, Living Nativity, Living Stations, Hiking, Swimming, serving Lunch to Disabled Persons at a near-by facility, etc. All students who are members of the Jr. Youth Group must attend Faith Formation classes.

### SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP:

Our parish has a Sr. Youth Group comprised of youth in ninth through twelfth grades. All youth are welcome. A monthly calendar is prepared by the Pastor and the Youth Advisory Board which includes social and service activities. Evenings of Faith Formation classes are presented by the Pastor. Some activities are working with the Inner City Kids, Working at Soup Kitchens, Camping, Living Nativity, Living Stations, Retreats, Youth Rally, etc.

**OUR LADY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
FAITH FORMATION PERSONNEL**

PASTOR..... Rev. J. Duane Gavitt  
DEACON.....Deacon Cyril Kowalchick

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION .....Toni Kluck

OFFICE HOURS: Monday-Friday; 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

OFFICE PHONE: (570)636-3035

HOURS OF FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM: 9:15A.M. -1 0:15A.M.

FAITH FORMATION CENTER: (570)636-3698

CATECHISTS

KINDERGARTEN.....Kellie Palko  
GRADE 1.....Megan Wilkinson  
GRADE 2.....Mary Beth Mehalick  
GRADE 2.....Sara Schott  
GRADE 3.....Megan Mehalick  
GRADE 3.....Mary Yenko  
GRADE 4.....Barbara Kalena  
GRADE 5.....Marilyn Hodges  
GRADE 5.....Justin Pshar  
CONFIRMATION.....Terri Krone  
CONFIRMATION.....Patty Urenovich  
CONFIRMATION.....Father Gavitt

ASSISTANTS:

Audra Snyder

SUBSTITUTES:

Tracy Hauze

DRE ASSISTANTS:

Tracey Zapatocky, Marianne Gera

SAFETY COORDINATORS:

Tony Gabrielle, Marianne Gera

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:

JoAnne Korol

# VOLUNTEER

Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Faith Formation Program is a total parish effort. Since our programs are serviced by volunteers, we request your interest and support. Place an X on the appropriate line, if you can help.

Catechist - Aide - Substitute - Plays - Music

Crafts - Elementary Parties - Bake for Parties - Typist

Decorate

Any other way in which you could help? \_\_\_\_\_

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## SPECIAL NOTE:

The Catechetical Leader (Pastor, DRE, Parish Advisor Council, etc.) reserves the right to amend the handbook for just cause. In the event the Handbook is amended prompt notification will be given to the parents and students.

## PARENTS:

Please read and discuss the information with your children. Your signatures are an agreement to be governed by the policies/procedures contained in the Handbook. Please return this sheet to your child's Faith Formation teacher.

## STUDENT CONTRACT FOR FAITH FORMATION

I/we have read or have been told the contents of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Student/Parent Handbook and agree to be governed by the statements within.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parents)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student) (Student)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student) (Student)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_