



ST. GERARD MAJELLA CATHOLIC CHURCH



Family Faith Formation Parent Handbook 2025-2026

IMPORTANT: As a courtesy to our Religious Education staff, we kindly ask that you consult this handbook for answers before reaching out by phone, email, or in person.

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CALENDAR

Date	Time	Topic
Sun. Sept. 28, 2025	10:15am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Orientation Holy Mass
Sun. Oct. 5, 2025	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. Oct. 12, 2025	10:00am 12:00pm Holy mass	First Class Session Holy Mass
Sun. Oct 19, 2025	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. Oct 26, 2025	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Class Session Holy Mass
Sat. Nov 1, 2025	All Saint's Day 8:00am English Mass 7:00pm Spanish Mass	Holy Day of Obligation
Sun. Nov 2, 2025	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. Nov 9,2025	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Class Session Holy Mass
Sun. Nov 16, 2025	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. Nov 23, 2025	9:00am Holy Mass with Bishop Mat 10:00am	Holy Mass Class Session
Sun. Nov 30, 2025	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. Dec 7, 2025	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Class Session Holy Mass
Mon. Dec 8, 2025	Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary 8:00am English Mass 7:00pm Spanish Mass	Holy Day of Obligation
Sun. Dec 14, 2025	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun, Dec 21, 2025	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Class Session Holy Mass
Thurs Dec 25, 2025	Christmas 9:00am English Mass 11:00am Spanish Mass	Holy Day of Obligation

Date	Time	Topic
Sun. Dec 28, 2025	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Thurs Jan 1, 2026	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God 9:00am English Mass 11:00am Spanish Mass	Holy Day of Obligation
Sun. Jan 4, 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. Jan 11, 2026	10:00 Classes Resume 12:00pm Holy Mass	Class Session Holy Mass Virtus Training
Sun. Jan 18, 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. Jan 25, 2026	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Class Session Holy Mass Virtus Training
Sun. Feb 1, 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. Feb 8, 2026	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Class Session Holy Mass
Sun. Feb 15, 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Wed. Feb 18, 2026	Ash Wednesday TBA	Holy Mass
Sun. Feb 22, 2026	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Class Session Holy Mass
Sun. Mar 1, 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass
Sun. Mar 8, 2026	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Communion Retreat Holy Mass
Sun. Mar 15, 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass
Sun, March 22, 2026	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Confirmation Retreat Holy Mass
Sun. March 29, 2026	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Class Session Holy Mass
Holy Week Thurs April 2	Holy Thursday TBA	Holy Mass
Holy Week Fri April 3	Good Friday TBA	Services
Sat, April 4, 2026	At Sundown	Easter Vigil
Sun. April 5 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Easter Holy Mass

Date	Time	Topic
Sun April 12, 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. April 19, 2026	10:00am 12:00pm	Class Session Holy Mass
Sun. April 26, 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Sun. May 3, 2026	10:00am 12:00pm	Class Session Holy Mass
Sun. May 10, 2026	9:00am, 10:30am, 12:00pm, or 1:30pm	Holy Mass MUST attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella
Thurs. May 14, 2026	Asension of the Lord TBA	Holy Day of Obligation
Sun. May 17, 2026	10:00am 12:00pm Holy Mass	Last Class Session Holy Mass



FAMILY FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM STRUCTURE

At St. Gerard Majella Church, we invite parents to take an active role in the faith formation of their children. It is a unique program that provides learning experience to the family parents and children. The whole community is invited to attend the session. The Family Faith Formation Program (FFFP) of St. Gerard Majella is a two-part program: family faith formation and Mass attendance.

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION - HOW IT WORKS

Parents are the primary educators of their children. At St. Gerard Majella, we are honored to share this effort with the parents. For this reason, our program combines parish-based education with family-based education alternating between the two on a weekly basis.

- **WEEK A: PARISH-BASED EDUCATION:** Children and at least one parent attends the bi-weekly grade-specific formal classes with catechists at St. Gerard Majella Parish Hall.
 - If parents cannot attend the classes, they must designate a family member (over 18 years old) to take their place.
- **WEEK B: FAMILY-BASED EDUCATION:** Children attend bi-weekly classes at home with their parents in a more flexible environment.
 - During the family-based week, parents will use the school materials provided to teach their children at home.

MASS ATTENDANCE - HOW IT WORKS

Faith formation begins with prayers in the home and attendance at the Sunday Mass. Attendance to Mass is essential to children to deepen their understanding of what it means to worship and why it is vital to our salvation. At Mass, they will discover that they are valued and loved. They are a child of God.

- Parents and children are required to attend weekly mass and days of obligation at St. Gerard Majella Church.
- On parish-based week, when classes are held at St. Gerard Majella, families must attend the noon mass, where Fr. Gerard will offer special teachings on the meaning and structure of the Mass. Mass-cards will be distributed during class.
- On family-based week, when classes are held at home, families can choose to attend any Mass at St. Gerard Majella. **Weekly mass attendance at St. Gerard Majella remains mandatory on family-based weeks.** Mass-cards will be handed out during the previous class. If student forget their card, they may request a replacement at the rectory prior to Mass.

FIRST COMMUNION

- First communion is a two-year program
- New students must be within the grade range of 1st grade 2025 and above.

CONFIRMATION

- Confirmation is a two-year program
- Year 1 students must be within the grade range of 9th grade 2025 and above.

ADULT FORMATION PROGRAM

- The Adult Formation Program is a one-year program
- Students must be 18 years old in 2025 and above.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

We kindly ask all parents to do their best to follow the ethical standards shared in this handbook. It also includes all the policies you'll need to be familiar with.

- To be a registered parishioners of St. Gerard Majella Catholic Church is required to register your children to the Family Faith Formation Program.
- To assist your children in the at home biweekly classes. (You will be trained with easy step-by-step instructions.)
- To attend all parent classes and Father Gerardo’s retreat sessions. If a parent is unable to attend, please call 310-391-9637 or email stgerardre@gmail.com. We encourage grandparents, aunt, uncle or Godparent to attend as well.
- To pay the full registration fee of \$130.00 per child, due at the time of registration unless arrangements are made for a payment plan to be completed at the latest on **September 20, 2025**. No refunds will be provided. (If your financial situation renders you unable to pay, please contact us and we will work with you.)
Note: We are not charging a fee for religious education; sacraments are a free gift from God. We are charging a fee to cover the cost of all administrative expenses.
- To verify your email regularly and notify us of any changes of phone contact number or email address.
- To guide your children in meeting our student expectations. Remind them to bring their workbook materials to every class session, as consistent preparation supports their success.
- To ensure your children attend the class sessions biweekly.
- To ensure you and your children attend Holy Mass weekly and days of obligation.



Note: Failure to meet any of these expectations will necessitate remedial assignments and/or a parent-teacher meeting and may even result in your children receiving no credit for the course.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to demonstrate Reverence, Respect, and Responsibility in both the classroom and church settings. These 3-Rs create an environment in which our children can easily learn and understand the teachings of Jesus.

- To bring the required materials to class each week. (If a child forgets their book for 2 classes in a row and then requests a new book, there may be a replacement cost.)
- To be in the classroom promptly for classes.
- To turn off and store away cell phones, earphones, or any electronic devices at the start of class. **All such items are NOT permitted during class sessions, special events, and mass.**
- To participate in class the following ways:
 - To pay respectful attention to catechists and the priest.
 - To display reverence during prayer and discussions about God.
 - To complete homework and be prepared for discussions.
 - To be able to recite prayers: Sign of the cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Act of Contrition, etc.
 - To listen to attentively and participate actively.
 - To be willing to be a part of the conversation as regards to the lesson, mass, etc. (confirmation students especially.)
- Not to leave early without a dismissal note approved by the catechists before the class starts.

Note: Failure to meet any of these expectations will necessitate remedial assignments and/or a parent-teacher meeting and may even result in your children receiving no credit for the course.

Student Progress Reports will be issued in December and in May and will reflect attendance, participation, evidence of knowledge, and behavior.

CLASS AND MASS ATTENDANCE

Each student must attend the scheduled classes and weekly Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation at St. Gerard Majella Church. Parents and students are asked and firmly expected to prioritize their religious education classes.

We permit a maximum of 3 absences per child. If your children have more than 3 absences, they will receive no credit for the course.



If your children are unable to attend a class or Sunday Mass:

- Notify the DRE that your child will be absent by calling 310-391-9637 or email at stgerardre@gmail.com.
- Prepare the missed class and assignments.
- Bring a DRE approved excusatory note to the catechist.

Mass Cards will be distributed at the assigned class scheduled. You will receive a ticket with each Mass date. You **MUST** turn it in to a Catechist, Altar Server, or Priest at the **END** of MASS. You also have the option to place it in the collection basket. Mass cards given retroactively at future masses will not be accepted.

If a child does not complete the program and must move to another parish, a parent can request a letter to show the number of classes completed. The letter will be addressed to the parish that the family will register to.

TARDINESS AND LEAVING CLASS EARLY

We kindly ask that all students arrive on time for class and stay until dismissed by the catechist. Tardiness and early departure will be recorded, and if the total accumulated time equals one full class session, it will be counted as an absence. **We kindly ask that all students arrive on time for class and stay until dismissed by the catechist. Tardiness and early departure will be recorded. Any student who arrives more than 10 minutes late or leaves more than 5 minutes early will be marked absent for that day.**

PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles is committed to comply with the U.S.C.C Bishops'...Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People Article 12 of the Charter mandates that "each diocese establish and maintain a Safe Environment Program for children and youth." Considering this, the VIRTUS Teaching Touching Safety Program for Children was adopted by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in September of 2006.

All children and young people in any Archdiocesan Catholic School, Religious Education, Confirmation Programs or Youth Ministry Groups must receive annual Safe Environment Training through the VIRTUS® Teaching Touching Safety. All training sessions must be recorded on VIRTUS® Online. (Article 12)

Our scheduled Virtus training for students is scheduled in January 2026.

Concurrent with beginning any activities in our parish/school, all parish/school volunteers, including parents, staff or other paid personnel, who work in any capacity with or around children, as well as vulnerable adults or special needs persons, will be required to participate in the VIRTUS® Protecting God's Children Awareness Session for Adults. The Committee will help plan ongoing training sessions at the parish/school site to make sure everyone has met this requirement. (Article 12)

The Safeguard Committee will plan a date each September for a training of volunteers at St. Gerard Majella, which parents may attend if they are interested.

SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

At St. Gerard Majella, we believe every child deserves a supportive and inclusive faith formation experience. We encourage parents to share information such as learning differences, health conditions, language challenges, or family situations that might affect their child’s classroom participation. With this understanding, we can better support your child’s needs. Most children with special needs can thrive in our regular faith formation classes with the assistance of a classroom aide.

DRESS CODE

All students are expected to dress modestly and appropriately. Since church attendance is required, students should wear their Sunday best. This includes sleeved, plain tops paired with unripped pants, skirts, or dresses of modest length. Dresses must reach at least to the knee and cover the shoulders. Items such as tank tops, graphic or text-adorned shirts, ripped pants or jeans, and short skirts, shorts, or dresses are not permitted. **Please do not wear hats or hooded jacket during class or mass.**

PAYMENT POLICY

All parents are asked and firmly expected to pay the full registration fee of \$130.00 per child, due at the time of registration unless arrangements are made for a payment plan to be completed at the latest on September 20, 2025. **No refunds will be provided.** (If your financial situation renders you unable to pay, please contact us and we will work with you.)

Note: St. Gerard Majella Parish does not charge fees for religious education; sacraments are a free gift from God. We are charging a fee to cover the cost of all administrative expenses

CONTACT INFORMATION

Director, Religious Education Office, Gabriela Gudino Massie

Phone: 310-391-9637, and email: stgerardre@gmail.com

Parish Office Phone: 310-390-5034 and email: stgerardmajella@stgerardla.com

FAMILY AGREEMENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

I acknowledge receipt of the 2025-2026 St. Gerard Family Faith Formation Parent Handbook containing the policies, rules, and regulations of St. Gerard Faith Formation Program. I agree that the handbook is binding on the students and parents during the current faith formation year. I understand the program's administration will have the authority outlined in the handbook and retain all rights to abridge, amend, and add to these policies as needed or necessary. I understand that the policies, rules, and regulations contained in the handbook are established for the welfare and benefit of all Faith Formation students. I accept my responsibility for supporting the St. Gerard Faith Formation Program in its established policies and to see that my child adheres to the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook.

NAME OF STUDENT: _____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

DATE: _____

GRADE: _____

Please return this form signed before your child's first day of faith formation classes.