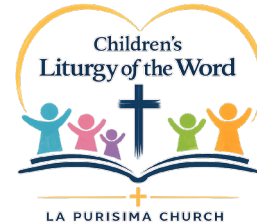


Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW)



LA PURÍSIMA CATHOLIC CHURCH

Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW) — Catechist Volunteer Ministry

Document Type: Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Ministry: Children's Liturgy of the Word

Parish: La Purísima Catholic Church

SECTION 1 — INTRODUCTION TO CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

***An important clarification:** CLOW is not babysitting, nor is it a separate faith formation class. It is a liturgical act — a reverent, age-appropriate participation in the Mass itself, rooted in the living tradition of the Church.*

Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW) is a practice in many U.S. parishes in which, after the opening rites of Sunday Mass, young children leave to a separate space to celebrate their own age-appropriate Liturgy of the Word, then return to the main assembly before the Liturgy of the Eucharist begins.

This practice is fully legitimate and is foreseen in the liturgical norms, specifically the *Directory for Masses with Children*, published by the Holy See in 1973.

Where the place itself and the nature of the community permit, it is appropriate to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word — including a reflection — with children in a separate but nearby room, after which the children are led back to join the rest of the assembly before the Eucharistic liturgy begins.

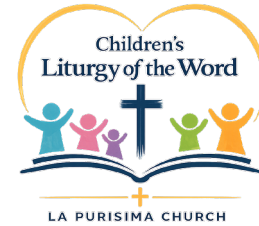
CLOW at La Purísima Catholic Church is a joyful, reverent expression of the parish's commitment to forming young disciples. It honors the truth that the parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families and is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents.

SECTION 2 — PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Children's Liturgy of the Word ministry at La Purísima exists to:

1. **Proclaim the Word of God** in a manner accessible and meaningful to young children, drawing them into an encounter with the living Christ present in Scripture.
2. **Bridge Liturgy and Life** — provide experiences that link Liturgy and catechesis and promote appreciation for the community celebration of the Eucharist.
3. **Form Young Disciples** — present the teachings of Jesus Christ, his ministry, and the major events of his life in ways children can understand and embrace.

Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW)



4. **Support the Family** — reinforce what parents, pastors, catechists, and teachers cooperate closely to ensure: that catechesis offered children is truly an ecclesial catechesis consistent with Christian values lived in the family.
5. **Cultivate a Love for the Mass** — prepare children to eventually participate fully and actively in the entire Sunday Liturgy alongside their families.

SECTION 3 — SCOPE, GOALS, DELIVERABLES & OUTCOMES

Scope

This SOP applies to all CLOW volunteer catechists serving at La Purísima Catholic Church during any Sunday or Holy Day Mass at which the program is offered. It covers pre-session preparation, in-session conduct, child supervision, and post-session responsibilities.

Goals

- Offer a structured, age-appropriate proclamation and reflection on the Sunday Scriptures for children (typically ages 5–11 (children <5 years must be accompanied by an adult)).
- Create a prayerful, welcoming, and safe environment for every child.
- Ensure continuity of ministry by maintaining trained, background-checked, and properly credentialed volunteers at all times.
- Serve as a catechetical tool to prepare children for the reception of First Communion and to learn how to live the Liturgy.

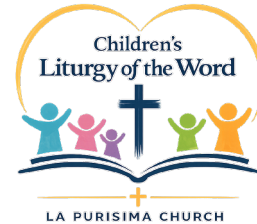
Deliverables

- Weekly CLOW sessions (approximately 30 minutes) led by prepared catechist volunteers.
- Age-appropriate lesson materials aligned with the Sunday Lectionary.
- Completed compliance documentation (background check, safe environment training) on file for each active volunteer.

Outcomes

- Children develop a foundational love for Sacred Scripture and the Mass.
- Catechists, enlightened by God's Word and the teaching of the Church, impart to others an initiation or a deeper formation in those realities.

Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW)



- Families are supported in their irreplaceable role as the primary educators of their children in the faith.
 - The parish community grows in its shared mission of handing on the faith to the next generation.
-

SECTION 4 — ELIGIBILITY

To serve as a CLOW catechist volunteer at La Purísima Catholic Church, individuals must:

- Be a registered, active parishioner of La Purísima Catholic Church in good standing.
 - Demonstrate a sincere Catholic faith and commitment to the teachings of the Magisterium.
 - Successfully complete all required steps outlined below (Steps 1–4).
 - Maintain current Safe Environment Training certification (recertified every 3 years).
-

SECTION 5 — VOLUNTEER ONBOARDING PROCESS

✓ STEP 1 — Registration & Sign-Up

Confirm active parishioner status at La Purísima Catholic Church.

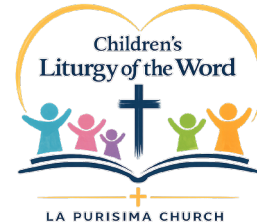
- **Contact:** Marisol Cortes  mcortes@lapurisima.net  714.633.5800
 - The **Parish Community Registration Form** may also be used to update existing parishioner information.
 - **Volunteer Information Questionnaire:** Erika Abao will email a Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet/information questionnaire. Complete and return by replying directly to such email from:  eabao@lapurisima.net
-

✓ STEP 2 — Background Check

The Diocese of Orange Office of Child and Youth Protection requires all volunteers who minister to young people to complete a background check before serving in any youth ministry role.

- A **Live Scan (DOJ) fingerprint background check** is required.
- The **\$30.00 fee is reimbursable** by La Purísima Parish upon submission of receipt.

Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW)



To schedule your background check:

- **Contact:** Marisol Cortes  mcortes@lapurisima.net  714.633.5800  Mon-Fri: 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM  Saturday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

 *No volunteer may serve in CLOW until the background check is fully processed and approved.*

✓ STEP 3 — Safe Environment Training (Initial Certification)

All volunteers who minister to children are required to complete the Diocesan Safe Environment Training before their first session.

- **Format:** Interactive online course
- **Duration:** Approximately 60 minutes
- **Content:** Video modules and multiple-choice questions covering child safety, abuse prevention, and proper conduct in youth ministry settings.
- **Access:** Marisol Cortes will email the direct link to the training site upon confirmation of Steps 1 and 2.

Safe Environment Training — Recertification (Every 3 Years)

Safe Environment certification must be renewed every **three (3) years** to remain in active ministry status.

- **Format:** Online video modules with multiple-choice questions
- **Duration:** Approximately 60–90 minutes
- **Process:** Recertification links and reminders will be provided by the parish office. Volunteers are responsible for completing recertification before their certification expiration date.
- Volunteers whose certification has lapsed will be temporarily suspended from CLOW ministry until recertification is complete and on file.

 *Recertification records are maintained by the parish and Diocese of Orange Office of Child and Youth Protection.*

✓ STEP 4 — Ministry Training & Onboarding

Once Steps 1–3 are fully completed and verified, the volunteer will be contacted by the CLOW Ministry Coordinator to begin training for active ministry.