

St. Theresa Catholic Church  
Office of Religious Education



Handbook for Parents and Students  
2016-2017

Dear Parents,

Thank you for enrolling your child or children in St. Theresa's Religious Education Program. Our goal is to help your child or children to grow in their knowledge of the faith and to understand what we believe. This is a joint effort between you as parents, the Religious Education Office, and the parish as a whole. In order to provide the best possible environment for all of our children to learn, this handbook is provided in order to ensure communication is as clear as possible.

St. Theresa Religious Education looks forward to the opportunity to work with your child(ren). All of us are engaged in this ministry out of love for the Lord, the Catholic Church, and for the children who are part of the program. The goal is to help teach the riches of the Catholic Faith for the students to grow in their knowledge and faith life for many years to come.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Religious Education Office.

In Christ,

Elizabeth Vogt  
Director of Religious Education  
St. Theresa Parish  
847-359-2846 x 111  
[elizabethv@sttheresachurch.org](mailto:elizabethv@sttheresachurch.org)

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Religious Education Phone: 847-359-2846  
Report Absence/Tardy 847-359-2846 or [religiouseducation@sttheresachurch.org](mailto:religiouseducation@sttheresachurch.org)  
If emailing absence, please do so by 3:30pm on Tuesdays  
or 8:00am on Saturdays.

St. Theresa Parish Website: [www.sttheresachurch.org](http://www.sttheresachurch.org)  
There is a Religious Education Tab on the Home Page  
Emergency Closing: [www.emergencyclosing.com](http://www.emergencyclosing.com) and email to each family

## ST. THERESA RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PERSONNEL

Pastor: Rev. Timothy Fairman [ftim@sttheresachurch.org](mailto:ftim@sttheresachurch.org)  
Associate Pastor: Rev. Tom Bishop [ftom@sttheresachurch.org](mailto:ftom@sttheresachurch.org)  
Rev. Matthew Jamesson [fmatt@sttheresachurch.org](mailto:fmatt@sttheresachurch.org)  
Resident Priest: Rev. Ron Lewinski [fron@sttheresachurch.org](mailto:fron@sttheresachurch.org)  
Director of Religious Education: Mrs. Elizabeth Vogt [elizabethv@sttheresachurch.org](mailto:elizabethv@sttheresachurch.org)  
Administrative Assistant: Mrs. Marsha Jones [religiouseducation@sttheresachurch.org](mailto:religiouseducation@sttheresachurch.org)

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CATECHISTS

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Day and Time</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Catechist</u>
RCIC	Sundays 10:00am – 12:00pm	Festle Board Room	Ms. Maggie Brigham
Kindergarten	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 16	Miss Amy Trapani
1 <sup>st</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 1	Miss Sue Novotny
1 <sup>st</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 3	Miss Kristin Kanouse Mrs. Mary Jane Donahue
1 <sup>st</sup> grade	Saturdays 9:00am – 10:30am	Room 1	Mr. Frank Annerino
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 6	Mrs. Beth Suehr
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 7	Mrs. Linda Reckamp
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	Saturdays 9:00am – 10:30am	Room 6	Miss Bianca Lev
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	Saturdays 9:00am – 10:30am	Room 7	Mr. Carl Siemianowski
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 8	Mrs. Sal Willer
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 9	Mrs. Frances Kanouse
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	Saturdays 9:00am – 10:30am	Room 8	Mrs. Brooke Hjelm
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 14	Miss Amanda Wozniak
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 15	Mrs. Marilyn Donahue Mr. Dave Donahue
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 6:30pm – 8:00pm	Room L2	Miss Cheryl Valenti
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Saturdays 9:00am – 10:30am	Room 14	Mrs. Sue Grahek
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 10	Mrs. Kristi Braun
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room 12	Mrs. Heather Murphy
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 6:30pm – 8:00pm	Room L3	
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Saturdays 9:00am – 10:30am	Room 15	Mrs. Arabella Buesching
6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room L5	Mrs. Marlo James
6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room L6	Mrs. Jean Head
6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 6:30pm – 8:00pm	Room L6	
6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Saturdays 9:00am – 10:30am	Room L6	Mr. Leo Miklius
7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room L2	Mrs. Justine Braskich
7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room L3	Ms. Beth Thompson
7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Tuesdays 6:30pm – 8:00pm	Room L5	Mrs. Ann Maco
7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Saturdays 9:00am – 10:30am	Room L2	Mrs. Elise Leszczynski
Confirmation	Sundays 9:00am – 11:00am	Festle Board Room	Mrs. Klaudia Lannoye
Confirmation	Tuesdays 4:30pm – 6:00pm	Room L4	Mrs. Shelia Feerick
Confirmation	Tuesdays 6:30pm – 8:00pm	Pauline Center Rm 105	Mrs. Nancy Brinckerhoff Mr. Phil Brinckerhoff
Confirmation	Saturdays 9:00am – 10:30am	Room L4	Mrs. Maria Goldstein

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASS DAYS AND TIMES**

Sundays	9:00am – 11:00am	Confirmation
Sundays	10:00am – 12:00pm	RCIC
Tuesdays	4:30pm – 6:00pm	Kindergarten – Confirmation
Tuesdays	6:30pm – 8:00pm	4 <sup>th</sup> grade – Confirmation
Saturdays	9:00am – 10:30am	1 <sup>st</sup> grade - Confirmation

## **MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY**

### **Statement of Catechetical Purpose**

“The aim of catechesis is to lead believers to a deeper knowledge and love of Christ and the Church and a firm commitment to follow him” (National Directory for Catechesis). Focusing on Jesus as the very center of catechesis, the goal of the St. Theresa Religious Education Office is to promote the knowledge of faith, meaningful participation in liturgical worship and the sacramental life of the Church, offer moral formation, teach prayer and lead believers to become Disciples of Christ.

### **Mission**

Our parish Religious Education Program serves the needs of our young parishioners who attend public schools and those preparing for the Sacraments. Classes are held at various times throughout the week from September through April.

### **Philosophy**

The Religious Education Program at St. Theresa is an essential part of the parish’s mission to preach the Gospel to all people. From the earliest stages the child is introduced to the liturgy, Scripture, and the traditions of the Church. Our goal is to help your child(ren) grow in the richness and knowledge of the faith and to understand what we believe through meaningful participation in liturgical worship and the Sacramental life of the Church: to offer moral formation, teach prayer, and lead believers as disciples of Christ.

### **Parish Sacramental Programs**

The preparation process for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation follow the guidelines of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Parent formation sessions and Sacramental celebrations are combined for our parish school and religious education program. The Director of Religious Education oversees the sacramental preparation.

### **Parents**

Parents have given their children the precious gift of life and are recognized as the primary and principal educators. They are the ones who create a family atmosphere enlivened by love and respect for God, which includes worship of God, weekly attendance at Mass, and love and respect for others.

### **Students**

The St. Theresa Religious Education program exists for the sake of the students. The student not only learns more about the faith within the confines of class, but also shares his/her talents with his/her fellow students. The student has certain responsibilities of being respectful, taking responsibility for his/her action, and follow the rules put in place to insure each person’s safety and the learning environment.

### **Catechists**

The catechists of St. Theresa, in cooperation with the parents, are committed to creating a superior, faith-based education by creating a learning environment that encourages the students to become lifelong learners and disciples of Jesus Christ in the world in which they live. Catechists have the responsibility to be a presence of Jesus in the lives of our students and to create a safe learning environment guided by love and respect for God and each other, to provide quality faith based education, and to continue to grow in our own faith.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BOARD**

Pastor:	Rev. Timothy Fairman
Priest Liaison to Religious Education:	Rev. Matthew Jamesson
Director of Religious Education:	Elizabeth Vogt
President:	Carl Siemianowski
Vice President:	Maureen Ross
Secretary:	Kate Kelly
Board Members:	Frank Annerino
	Marc Goldstein
	Bianca Lev
	Joanne Ranallo
	Cheryl Valenti
	Anne Walker

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION AND ADMISSION**

Admission to our program is first given to registered, practicing parishioners of St. Theresa Parish. Once the needs of our parishioners have been met, non-registered parishioners may enroll in the program. If your child is entering our program for the first time, a copy of the child's baptismal certificate is required. If your child has participated in Religious Education in another parish, the name and address of the parish need to be provided as well as the dates and grades the child attended.

It is important for us to offer the best faith formation we can, and each year builds on the previous year. It is strongly recommended for your child(ren) to attend classes every year to receive a more well-rounded education in our Catholic faith. It is important for students to attend class each week and to attend Mass on Sunday.

Students should attend a minimum of one year prior to the year in which he/she receives a Sacrament. Children who are in 2nd grade and have not received any formal religious education will be placed in 1st grade for that year and will receive First Reconciliation and First Communion in 3rd grade. If a child is in 3rd grade or older and has not received any formal Religious Education, that child will be placed in a children's catechumenate/RCIC class for one year as an introduction to the faith life at St. Theresa. In the children's catechumenate/RCIC class, students will be prepared for First Reconciliation and First Communion. Children age 7 or older who have not been baptized will also be placed in the children's catechumenate/RCIC class and will prepare and receive the Sacraments of Initiation. Children in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and have not received prior formal religious education the year prior will be placed in 7<sup>th</sup> grade for that year and will receive Confirmation in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

In the Archdiocese of Chicago, there is not a mandated age for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each parish establishes the age for Confirmation based on the Sacramental readiness for their parishioners. Out of respect for those reasons we choose not to accept new family registrations the year prior or the year of a Sacramental year if transferring from a local parish that offers Confirmation for a different age than is offered at St. Theresa.

### **Home Study Religious Education**

Home Study in Religious Education is an option for those parents desiring this approach. Home Study is not an option for students receiving a Sacrament that year i.e. no 2<sup>nd</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade student shall be home schooled. Home Study students are required to meet with the Director of Religious Education at a minimum of twice per school year to review their progress. Ordinarily the first meeting will take place in December/January and the second at the end of the school year - April/May.

### **Special Needs**

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to inform our office of any learning disability, emotional or physical difficulty, or other problem that may require the special attention of our staff. This can be noted on the medical release form or by written documentation. All information will be held in strict confidence.

## **TUITION AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

### **Tuition**

There is a tuition and book fee for Religious Education each year to cover expenses. The fees for 2016-2017 are as follows:

Registered Parishioners:	1 child = \$260	2 children = \$370	3+ children = \$420
Non-registered:	\$430 per child		
Book Fee:	\$40 per child		
Sacrament Fee:	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade and RCIC = \$55	Confirmation = \$75	
Bible Fee:	6 <sup>th</sup> grade and RCIC = \$25	(Bibles will be used 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> grade)	

One-half of the tuition, the entire book fee, and the entire sacrament fee are due at registration. The second half of the tuition is due by October 1. If you are unable to pay on this schedule, you may contact the Director of Religious Education to set up a payment plan. If you set up a payment plan you are still responsible for the entire amount of tuition and fees.

### **Financial Assistance**

Some financial assistance is available for families who otherwise cannot afford Religious Education. In case of extreme financial hardship, a family may apply for Financial Aid. To apply for Financial Aid, the following must be fulfilled:

- You must contact the Religious Education Office to request a PSAS financial assistance packet.
- You must file your PSAS financial aid application *before September 1*.
- You will be informed whether or not you qualify for financial aid and, if so, in what amount. If you do not qualify, you will be responsible to pay the full amount.
- You must re-apply for financial assistance every year in which it is needed.

**No financial assistance will be provided without filling out the PSAS financial aid application.**

In order to ensure fairness to all persons requesting financial aid, a private financial assistance company determines the amount of financial assistance to be granted to every family. **All tuition assistance information will be kept strictly confidential.** If a family should encounter an unexpected emergency situation after September 1, they should immediately contact the Religious Education Office.

### **Tuition Non-Payment Exclusion Policy**

In selecting St. Theresa for the Religious Education of your child(ren), there is a financial and moral obligation for the family to pay all tuition and fees incurred through the course of any program year. (Provisions are made for legitimate unexpected hardship and financial assistance in extraordinary cases as determined by actual need).

It is the policy of St. Theresa Religious Education that all tuition and fees are to be paid in-full by October 1, unless alternate payment arrangements have been approved.

In the case of returning student(s), the student(s) will not be permitted to register for the next year unless all current and past tuition and fees for all students in the family have been paid in full.

In the case of a student(s) completing the program, the student(s) will not receive the final documentation unless all tuition and fees have been paid in-full for all students in the family.

In the case of transferring student(s), records will not be processed or provided unless all tuition and fees for all students in the family are paid in-full.

This policy is consistent with the tuition Non-Payment Exclusion Policy as outlined by the Archdiocese of Chicago.

## **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

### **Curriculum**

St. Theresa Religious Education uses the *Faith and Life* series of books published by Ignatius Press for grades K-7. Confirmation classes use *Confirmed in the Spirit* by Loyola Press and *Decision Point* by Dynamic Catholic. All of these materials are approved for use by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Archdiocesan Office of Catechesis and Youth Ministry and are in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. They bear the Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur certifying they are free of doctrinal or moral error. Parents are invited and encouraged to review the material in their child's books and discuss it with them.

### **Learning Expectations**

- Parents are *the first and most influential* educators of their children. You are encouraged as parents to discuss the material learned in class. Discussing the material, praying as a family and frequently attending Mass will help your child to grow in his or her faith.
- Mass attendance on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation is a serious obligation. Religious Education assists the student in growing in his/her faith; it does not take the place of Mass attendance. Students are expected to be familiar with the Mass and the particularities of the previous week's Mass. Mass attendance every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation is expected of every student.
- Parents are asked to assist their children in learning the formal prayers of the Church. These include The Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and Act of Contrition. By helping your child memorize his/her prayers, you can also help build a habit of prayer and strengthen your child's relationship with God. Additional prayers are introduced at various grade levels.
- Homework is sometimes assigned by the catechists. The goal in assigning homework is to reinforce lessons learned in class. Please discuss your child's homework with him or her and assist him or her to ensure that he/she is learning the material as well as possible.
- Some children have learning disabilities or other health or mental health concerns. If your child has any disabilities or concerns, please inform the Religious Education Office so that we may do all we can to meet his/her needs. Without this knowledge, we cannot help your child. We will distribute this information only to those who must know in order to teach your child.

### **Examinations**

There is an exam at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and Confirmation year to ensure your child has a basic knowledge of the Catholic Faith and has taken preparation for the Sacrament seriously

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

St. Theresa Religious Education is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, a corporation sole, in the Archdiocese of Chicago, admits students of any race, color, sex national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privilege, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in this program.

St. Theresa Religious Education does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, loan or financial assistance programs or other program.

### **Arrival/Dismissal of Students**

It is important for the educational process that students are always present at class. Since students attend Religious Education only once a week, absences are very hard to overcome. Therefore we strongly encourage weekly attendance. If a student is unable to attend his/her normally scheduled class, he/she may attend another class at a different time during the same week. Students missing five or more classes in a year may be required to complete additional assignments or may need to repeat a year if it is a Sacramental year.

There are only two doors from which students and parents may enter the building: the Main Entrance (Door 1) on the East side of the school and the Benton Parking Lot Entrance (Door 4) on the North side of the school.

- Doors will open for catechists 30 minutes prior to the start of classes. Doors will open for students 15 minutes prior to the start of class.
- Students in grades K-3 must be dropped off and picked up in their classrooms by their parents. An older sibling may drop off or pick up a younger sibling only if the catechist is notified by the parents.
- Students in grades 4-8 may be dropped off and picked up at the two entrances of the school (Door 1 and Door 4) or may be dropped off and picked up by their parents at the classrooms.
- Please respect the traffic flow of the parking lot, in order that you and everyone else may drop off and pick up their children as efficiently and safely as possible. Please enter the parking lot in the driveway closest to the school and exit via the driveways near the church and rectory. Please park only in designated parking spaces, not the driveway, as this disrupts others.
- The Benton Lot door (Door 4) will be locked five minutes after the beginning of class and will be opened 5 minutes prior to dismissal. Any student being dropped off late or picked up early will need to go to the main entrance (Door 1).
- Students **may not enter** their classrooms unless a catechist is present in the classrooms. It is easier for the students to be supervised by the Religious Education staff when they are in the halls rather than in the classrooms.

St. Theresa Religious Education presumes both parents of every student have equal access even if the parents are divorced or separated *unless there is a form on file stating otherwise*. This should include written documentation included in a court document. If a form is on file that a student may not be released to one parent, the custodial must provide a written letter stating the names of the individuals who may pick up the student and must pick up the student in the classroom. *It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to file this letter with the Religious Education Office.*

### **Absence/Tardiness/Early Pick Up of Students**

- If an absence is unavoidable, parents should contact the Religious Education Office. If the absence is known ahead of time, please contact the Religious Education Office before the start of class time. If you are sending an email to report the absence, please do so by 3:30pm on Tuesdays or by 8:00am on Saturdays. When calling in an absence, please call 847-359-2846 x 112. Please give us your child(ren)'s name, grade, and catechist or room number. If at all possible, it is encouraged for the student to attend class at a different time in the same week (Tuesday student attending the Saturday class or vice versa). Please indicate if this is an option with each absence.
- In the event of an emergency absence such as illness, please call the Religious Education Office as soon as possible. In such an event, you may have to leave a message and may receive a call indicating that your child is absent if we have not been able to check the messages.
- If a child is marked absent by his/her teacher and we have not been informed of his/her absence, we will place a call to the parents to inform of the absence.
- If a child is more than five minutes late, he or she is considered tardy. A parent will need to take his/her child to the front office, sign the child in, and bring the child to class. The child will receive a slip which she/he will give to his/her catechist.
- If a parent needs to pick up a child early, the parent will need to sign his/her child out at the front office. The parent must present the slip she/he receives at the front office to the catechist at time of early pick-up in order for the student to be released.
- There is no substitute for a child being present in the classroom. While absences are occasionally a necessary part of life, please try to avoid having your child miss an excessive number of classes.

## **Behavioral Expectations**

Students are expected to treat everyone with respect and to act appropriately. Repeated disrespectful behavior will result in disciplinary action. Ordinarily the following disciplinary steps will be taken in the event of misbehavior.

1<sup>st</sup> Instance: Verbal warning by catechist.

2<sup>nd</sup> Instance: Director of Religious Education is notified and speaks with the student.

3<sup>rd</sup> Instance: Parent is notified.

4<sup>th</sup> Instance: Student is withdrawn from class.

Disrespectful behavior includes, but is not limited to: obscene language, theft, damage to personal or school property, disruptive behavior, use of cell phones or other technology, etc. during class time. Students are required to leave materials in the desks alone. Students will replace anything damaged, destroyed or missing along with a letter of apology.

St. Theresa reserves the right to immediately remove a student from the classroom for any serious behavioral infraction. Serious behavioral infractions include, but are not limited to: fighting or assault, leaving the school or classroom without permission, possession, use, sale and/or distribution of any dangerous or unlawful object (e.g. cigarettes, liquor, drugs, matches, knives or other blades, fireworks, weapons, etc.), student-to-student or student-to-catechist harassment, lying, cheating and stealing. St. Theresa may, at its sole discretion, remove a student for the remainder of the year without refund of any tuition or fees for such infractions.

St. Theresa reserves the right to inspect all desks and other parish supplied enclosures and the right to inspect personal property when there is reasonable belief that a participant is violating the rules and regulations of the program. All contraband will be seized and the appropriate authorities will be contacted.

## **Electronics Policy**

Students should not bring iPods, hand-held electronic games, and other such devices with them to class. They have no instructional value, and such devices are often a distraction. Students are permitted, though not encouraged, to bring cell phones for emergency use. Phones must, however, be turned **off** during class and not used during class time. St. Theresa assumes no responsibility for personal electronic devices. Emergency communication from parents to students must go through the front office during class time. Any electronic device used in violation of this policy will be confiscated and returned at the end of class.

## **Health and Safety**

Supervision begins 15 minutes prior to the start of class time and ends 10 minutes after the end of class time. Parents will be contacted if a student has not been picked up in the allotted time. If a parent cannot be reached, the Emergency Contact will be contacted. If neither parent nor emergency contacts can be contacted, St. Theresa will contact the authorities. It is required that every student have an Emergency Release Form on file each year.

In the event that a student becomes ill or injured during class time, a parent/guardian will be contacted. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be contacted. If no one can be contacted and time is of the essence, the program administrator will act in a manner that is both responsible and reasonable. Should the injury or illness be of such severity that immediate care is warranted, the program administrator will immediately call the authorities i.e. the Palatine Fire Department.

The Religious Education Office cannot administer, maintain or supervise the taking of medication except in extraordinary circumstances. If a student requires medication, a parent must come to class to administer it.

Please inform the Religious Education Office about any health concerns that your child may have, including allergies. We will treat such information as confidential and release it only as necessary.

## Communication with Parents

Religious education is a joint effort between the parish and the parents. Without both parent and parish working towards the same goals, religious education is impossible. In order to ensure the best possible religious education for your child, it is essential that communication between our office and you be as clear and efficient as possible. St. Theresa will use the following methods to send you routine communications:

- Religious Education Handbook contains the general information relevant to all parents.
- Newsletters and letters to parents are often sent via email or distributed to the students in class. Please ask your child if he/she received anything for you.
- **Emergency closing notifications** for Religious Education will first be listed at [www.emergencyschoolclosings.com](http://www.emergencyschoolclosings.com) under "St. Theresa School Religious Classes." Then, catechists will be contacted on the cancellation, followed by an email to the address you supplied at registration. Please check the email address you provided before class in case of emergency closings.
- Catechists or Religious Education personnel may contact you if there is a particular concern about your child. They will call or email you.

Communication from parents is also welcome and valued. Please provide as specific information as possible. If you have any questions or concerns about the Religious Education Program or about your child's catechist, please feel free to call or email Elizabeth Vogt in the Religious Education Office at 847-359-2846 x 111 or [ElizabethV@sttheresachurch.org](mailto:ElizabethV@sttheresachurch.org).