

# SAINT THERESA CATHOLIC CHURCH

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

# HANDBOOK

**2022-2023**



## *Office of Religious Education*

21370 Saint Theresa Lane  
703-729-3714

Ashburn, VA 20147  
fax: 703-729-9036

[reoffice@sainttheresaparish.com](mailto:reoffice@sainttheresaparish.com)

[lbayne@sainttheresaparish.com](mailto:lbayne@sainttheresaparish.com)

*“Let the little children come to Me.”*

*“It Is Christ Alone Who Teaches.”*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement.....	4
Role of Parents .....	5
Curriculum .....	5
Role of Students .....	6
Learning Disabilities/Health Related Problems.....	6
Medical Needs.....	6
The Sacrament of Penance.....	6
Prayers to be Learned.....	7
Volunteer Opportunities .....	8
Class Sessions & Assignment Policy .....	8
Class Change Policy .....	8
Grade Levels .....	9
Attendance/Absences .....	9
Attendance & CYO Participation .....	9
Inclement Weather .....	9
Dress Code .....	10
Arrival and Departure .....	10
Parking Lot Procedures Map .....	11
Early & Late Pick up.....	12
Homework.....	12
Discipline .....	12
Electronic Devices .....	12
Sacramental & Confirmation Preparations .....	13
Youth Ministry .....	13
Formation in Christian Chastity.....	14
Home Schooling.....	14
Child Safety Program.....	14
RE Calendar .....	15
Handbook Acceptance Form.....	17



*Saint Theresa Catholic Church*  
*Office of Religious Education*  
*21370 St. Theresa Lane*  
*Ashburn, VA 20147*

Dear Parents,

Welcome! Thank you for enrolling your child in our Religious Education Program and for the privilege that you have thereby afforded us of sharing in the wonderful work of both educating your child in the Faith and opening up an awareness in your child of the Love that God has for each one of us!

This Handbook includes many resources to assist you throughout the coming year, including an RE Calendar (subject to change), RE Program policies, contact information, emergency policies, and a parking lot map with protocols for drop-off and pick-up. Changes to the RE Calendar are announced in the Parish Bulletin, so be sure to check the bulletin weekly for updates.

Our program represents the efforts of many people—our priests, staff, and many volunteers (teachers, co-teachers, teacher's aides, substitute teachers, coordinators, hall monitors and office helpers), all who make a generous commitment of time and talents to support the work of educating Saint Theresa Parish children in our Faith. Remember to thank them for witnessing to the Truth, and be generous with your support, too!

The RE Office is dedicated to providing the best catechetical tools possible for our students and their families. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions regarding the Program or your child's experiences here, please call, email, or visit me to discuss the matter in confidence. The RE Office phone number is 703-729-3714 and email is [reoffice@sainttheresaparish.com](mailto:reoffice@sainttheresaparish.com).

Thank you, and may God richly bless you and your families.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Mr. Larry Bayne  
Director of Religious Education

## Parents Prayer

**Most loving Father, the example of parenthood,  
 You have entrusted our children to us to bring them up for You  
 And prepare them for everlasting life.  
 Assist us with your grace, that we may fulfill  
 this sacred duty with competence and love.  
 Teach us what to give and what to withhold.  
 Show us when to reprove, when to praise and when to be silent.  
 Make us gentle and considerate, yet firm and watchful.  
 Keep us from the weakness of indulgence and the excess of severity.  
 Give us the courage to be disliked sometimes by our children,  
 when we must do necessary things  
 which are displeasing in their eyes.  
 Give us the imagination to enter their world  
 in order to understand and guide them.  
 Grant us all the virtues we need to lead them by word and example  
 in the ways of wisdom and piety.  
 One day, with them, may we enter into the joys  
 of our true and lasting home with You in Heaven.**

**Amen!**

## *Saint Theresa Parish Religious Education Mission Statement*

The Religious Education Program at Saint Theresa Parish is built on three pillars:

1. Support parents by teaching the truths of the Catholic Faith, with an emphasis on providing children with both the content and context to understand that content.
2. Inspire in each child a personal relationship with God and an awareness of His Merciful Love for each human being from conception to natural death.
3. Build character through faithful witness to the morals and the mission in the practice of the Catholic Faith and teaching about the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph and the lives of the saints.

*The best paradigm for any Religious Education is one in which teachers,  
 parents, and students all work together in cooperation for common goals of education.  
 In the case of your child's religious education, the goal is even more important—  
 the spiritual health and the personal fulfillment of each soul created by God  
 to "know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world"  
 so that each person "can be happy with Him in Heaven."*

## Role of Parents

Parents are the primary religious educators of their children (*Catechism of the Catholic Church 1653*). The home is where a child first experiences the Catholic faith. You teach primarily by example. It is extremely important for children to experience the love of God in their homes. The Religious Education (RE) Program aims to work in partnership with parents to assist them in living their vocation as educators of their children. The RE Program should merely complement, not replace, the catechesis that your children should receive in the home. The RE Program assists parents in their God-given role as educators of the Faith by:

- Providing weekly religious education classes for children in a classroom setting
- Providing opportunities to receive the sacrament of Confession
- Providing the truth of the Roman Catholic Faith as handed down by Jesus Christ through Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition, the Magisterium (teaching authority) of the Church, and the Church Fathers.

All Christian education finds its source within the sacramental life of the Church. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that children are given the opportunity for frequent participation in the Sacrament of Penance and weekly Sunday attendance at Holy Mass. Knowledge of the Catholic faith that is not upheld by the practice of the sacramental life is empty knowledge. Please ensure that your children are able to participate in the life of the Church by attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. The Parish also offers a Holy Hour on Wednesday evenings with Eucharistic Adoration and Confession. Finally, please make every effort to have your child arrive on time for class. This is particularly important because classes are held only once a week. Students should arrive no earlier than 15 minutes prior to the start of class.

We remind you that the role of the Religious Education program can only be secondary to you, the parent. We encourage you to do all you can, and we promise to do the best we can to aide and guide the sacramental preparation of your child. We offer these tips for preparing your child for the Sacraments of First Penance and First Holy Communion:

- Attend Sunday Mass together, as failure to attend Sunday Mass is a grave sin.
- Help your child to fully participate in the Mass. Remember, if you don't sing or recite the responses, neither will your child.
- Pray with your children. You are their first example of the faith.
- Take your child to Church to visit Jesus in the most Blessed Sacrament. Explain how Jesus is waiting in the Tabernacle for us to come to Him, and how He loves us to come and just be with Him.

## Curriculum

*The Image of God Series* (Ignatius Press) is used for Kindergarten, and the *Faith and Life Series* (Ignatius Press) for First through Eighth grades. In addition, 7th grade and 8th grade will use the *Chosen* Confirmation series (Ascension Press) to supplement Faith and Life. The Sacramental Preparation Class for older children (SPOC) uses the *One Faith, One Lord series* (Sadlier) supplemented by the St. Joseph First Communion Catechism.

The questions and answers at the end of each chapter in the student text should be understood and committed to memory for each grade.

## **Role of Students**

Students are expected to be punctual and prepared for class. Students should arrive no earlier than 15 minutes prior to the start of class. Each week, students should bring their textbooks, sharpened writing utensils, and completed homework assignments. Students should conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to a classroom environment.

- Students are reminded that all property and possessions found in the classroom are to be left untouched.
- No food, drink, or gum is permitted in the building!
- All students must enter and exit through the side doors only.

Every student has the right and privilege to learn in a classroom where students are well behaved. Similarly, every teacher and assistant has the right to teach in such an environment. In the event that a student finds it difficult to exhibit proper behavior, the teacher will call upon the Religious Education staff for assistance. Every attempt will be made to integrate the child into the classroom prior to contacting his/ her parents; if unsuccessful, the Religious Education staff will enlist the support of the parents to rectify the situation.

## **Learning Disabilities/Health Related Problems**

If your child has a learning disability or health-related problem, this information should be annotated in the Additional Information Section of the registration form. All information will remain confidential, but this information will be passed on to the Catechist, which will be helpful in teaching your child. If your child has an IEP (Individual Education Plan) please provide us with that information as well. Please call the Religious Education Office for further information, so we may have the tools to better instruct your child.

## **Medical Needs**

If your child needs special medications, your child must carry them to and from class every week. Your child must be able to self-administer emergency treatments; our staff and volunteers are not qualified to do so. Please advise the RE Office of your child's allergies/ medical or emotional conditions and the proper responses. This information is kept confidential and shared only with your child's teachers for safety purposes.

## **The Sacrament of Penance (Confession)**

Confessions will be offered during the school year: during Advent and during Lent. All students in grades third through eighth participate. All students are expected to know the Act of Contrition by heart and the proper procedures for the sacrament. The students will learn this in class, but parents should review these procedures and the Act of Contrition with their child. These opportunities for Confession should merely complement the families' frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance.

## Prayers to be Learned

Each class will begin and end with a prayer. The Diocesan Curriculum Guidelines assign basic prayers to be learned for each grade level. These prayers are to be reviewed, explained and memorized by the students. A life of prayer begins in the home. We strongly urge you to reinforce a life of prayer at home by praying the prayers found in the chart below with your child. It is crucial for students to learn these prayers in order to more fully participate in the liturgical life of the church. Each grade will review the prayers of the preceding grade.

Grade	Prayers to be Learned
Kindergarten:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genuflection</li> <li>• Grace before Meals</li> <li>• Sign of the Cross</li> </ul>
Grade 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hail Mary</li> <li>• Our Father</li> <li>• Glory be to the Father</li> </ul>
Grade 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guardian Angel Prayer</li> <li>• Act of Contrition</li> <li>• Act of Faith (simple form)</li> <li>• Act of Hope (simple form)</li> <li>• Morning Offering</li> </ul>
Grade 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apostles' Creed</li> <li>• Rosary</li> <li>• All Mysteries of the Rosary</li> </ul>
Grade 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acts of Faith, Hope &amp; Love</li> <li>• Rosary</li> </ul>
Grade 5:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divine Praises</li> <li>• Hail Holy Queen</li> <li>• Memorare</li> </ul>
Grade 6:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stations of the Cross</li> </ul>
Grade 7:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer to the Holy Spirit</li> <li>• The Angelus</li> <li>• The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi</li> <li>• The Regina Coeli</li> </ul>
Grade 8:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write personal petitions for liturgical use</li> <li>• See Psalms as prayers that express our needs</li> </ul>

## Volunteer Opportunities

The RE Program cannot function without the generous support of its volunteers, including teachers, teacher's aides, substitute teachers, coordinators, hall monitors and office helpers. All volunteers must be fully compliant prior to the start of classes. You will receive an email of acceptance with a link to fill out the proper forms on line for compliancy. Once completed, they'll be sent to the Parish Child Safety Coordinator, then if completed correctly, forward to the Chancery. At this time you'd come to the RE office to sign the VA Dept. of Social Services form. Please bring your ID as this form needs to be notarized. Constance Gilligan is a notary. Lastly, you'll need to register and sign up for the VIRTUS course. Please go to [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org) to do so. You only have 45 days to take the course from the time you've submitted the online background application.

## Class Sessions

<b>SESSION</b>	<b>DAY</b>	<b>CLASS TIME PERIOD</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>	Sunday	6:15 PM— 7:30 PM, 6th-8th Grades only
<b>Confirmation/9th</b>	Sunday	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
<b>SESSION 1</b>	Monday	4:30 PM - 5:45 PM
<b>SESSION 2</b>	Monday	6:15 PM - 7:30 PM
<b>SESSION 3</b>	Tuesday	4:30 PM - 5:45 PM
<b>SESSION 4</b>	Wednesday	4:30 PM - 5:45 PM
<b>SESSION 5</b>	Wednesday	6:15 PM - 7:30 PM

## Class Assignment Policy

The RE Program at Saint Theresa Parish offers seven Sessions each week to accommodate the number of children seeking religious education (over 1,100), the size limitations of our facilities, and the number of options that our parishioners need to interface with their busy schedules.

Classes are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Teachers, aides, and weekly volunteers enjoy the privilege of "pre-registration" in the Spring. Once on-line registration is completed, a copy of each child's Baptismal Certificate (if not already on file) and full tuition payment are received, your registration will be processed. Applications received after August 1st will be assessed a late fee of \$50.00 per family (exception: newly registered parishioners who are new to the area). No refunds will be honored after Sept. 9, 2022.

## Class Change Policy

The RE office does not longer accept class change requests. Religious Education takes priority over other activities that your child(ren) may be involved in. Please take this into consideration before registering your child(ren) as a change request will not be honored.



## Grade Levels

Students should be enrolled in the same grade as their academic grade, unless circumstances make that unfeasible. For more information, contact Mr. Bayne.

Our Sacramental Preparation Program for First Penance and First Holy Communion requires that students attend both First and Second Grades before receiving these Sacraments. Students will not be enrolled in Second Grade unless they have completed First Grade or can demonstrate knowledge of the First Grade material. Latin Rite students are required by Canon Law to have reached the age of seven to receive these Sacraments. Preparation for Confirmation is begun in Seventh Grade and completed in Ninth Grade: students must complete all these grades, or demonstrate knowledge of the material covered in all these grades, in order to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. For more information regarding our Sacramental Preparation Programs, please see those categories on pg. 13.

For those children who have not received formal catechetical instruction and/or Sacraments at the customary age, the RE Program offers “catch-up” classes by grade level: “MSP1” for children in grades 3-5, “MSP2” for grades 6-8, and “SP1” for students in high school.

## Attendance/Absences

Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class day. Please do not send a sick child to class. Excessive unexcused absences (4 or more) may result in evaluations, additional testing or repeat of the grade. For students in sacramental years, sacraments may be postponed to the following year. You must notify the RE office, in writing via email ([reoffice@sainttheresaparish.com](mailto:reoffice@sainttheresaparish.com)) or by calling the RE office if your student will be absent, and the reason for the absence. If a reason is not given, the absence will be marked unexcused. This must be done within a day of the absence, preferably before class time. Excused absences include illness, family emergency and school graded assignments. Remember, 3 tardies and/or early pick ups will result in one unexcused absence. **Students with 4-7 unexcused absences at the end of the RE school year will be required to turn in their Activity Book to the RE Office in order to be checked for completion and to see if they are prepared to go on to the next grade level. Students with 8 or more unexcused absences at the end of the RE school year will need to repeat their current grade the following year.**

## Attendance & CYO Participation

In order for students to participate in CYO sports, they must adhere to the Northern Virginia Jr. Catholic Youth Organization (NVJCYO) rules. Each player must be enrolled in the parish school or CCD program of the participating parish prior to the end of the first month of the current school year and be properly rostered at the beginning of the program and mid-year as well. In addition, each player must be regularly attending the parish school or CCD program of the participating parish throughout the school year, or be certified by the Pastor that said player is participating in the home schooling program. Excessive absences will null their participation in CYO.

## Inclement Weather

The RE Program follows Loudoun County’s snow cancellations: if public school in Loudoun County is cancelled or dismisses early, no RE Classes take place that day. If “after school activities” are cancelled on a County-wide basis in Loudoun County (not on a school-by-school basis), no RE classes take place. If bad weather threatens just as it is time for RE class, use your best judgment and stay home if your family’s safety could be jeopardized! Check your email for the latest status. Inclement weather cancellations of classes will not affect your children’s receiving of the sacraments.

## Dress Code

- **No leggings, jeggings, or yoga pants, as primary clothes**
- **Bermuda length shorts or longer are the only shorts that may be worn**
- **No short skirts or short shorts**
- **No tank tops (boys or girls) or spaghetti straps or other revealing clothing**
- **No shoes with cleats or wheels or flip flops**
- **All hats must be removed before entering the building.**

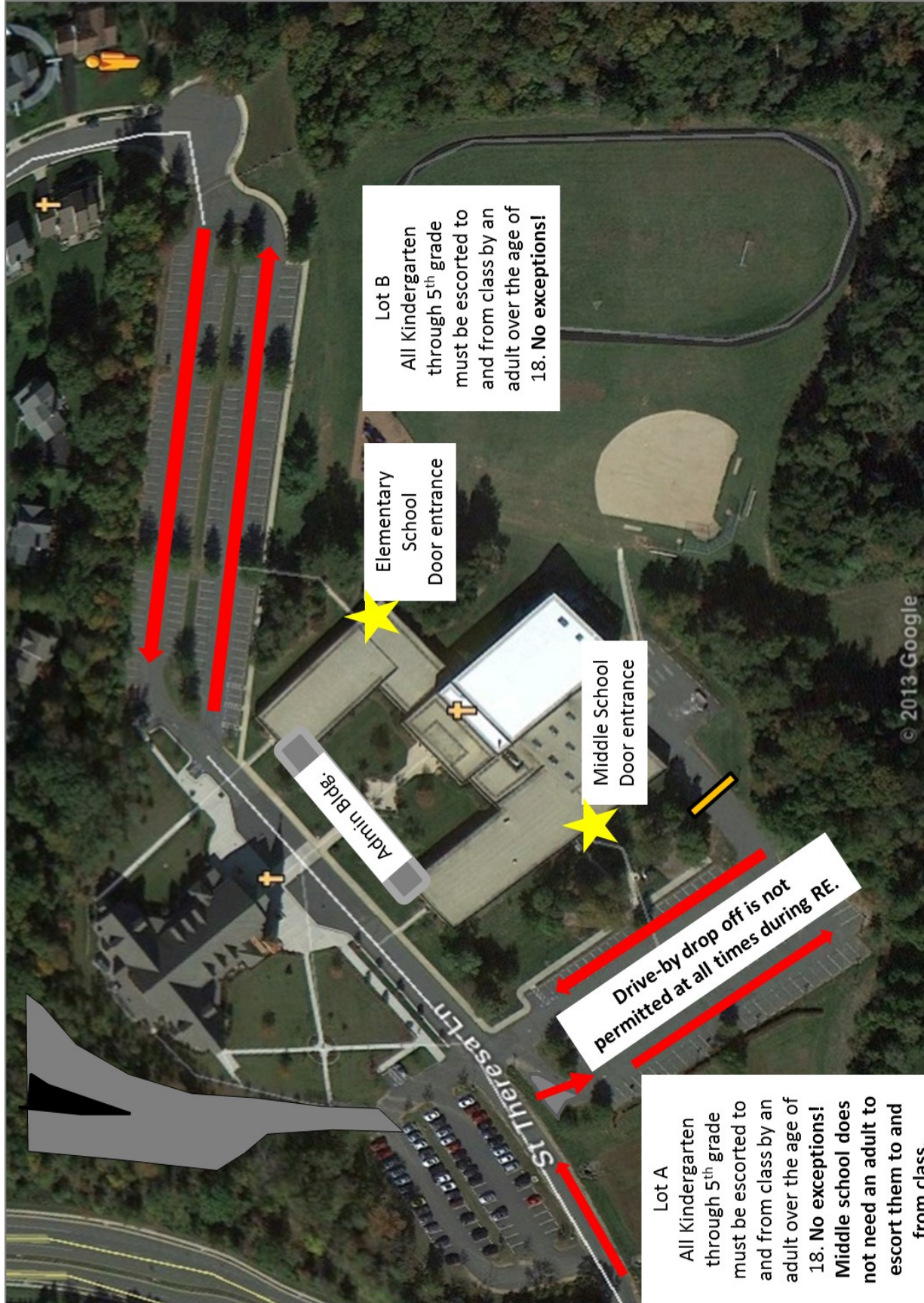
Certain types of attire are not appropriate to wear to RE class or in Church, in the presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Regular visits to Church throughout the year require that students' dress each week be appropriate to go to Church. Our efforts to teach students reverence for God and each other include guiding them in how to best present themselves modestly and respectfully. As the county has a dress code for school, it is not unreasonable for us to have one as well.

## Arrival

Drive-by drop off is not permitted. **Kindergarten to Grade 5 students must be escorted to and from the classroom by a parent or guardian.** If a child comes into the building alone, they will be sent back out to the parent for proper drop off. Students in grades 6-8 may walk into the building and to their classrooms by themselves. **However, they may not walk in with younger siblings, those students must still be escorted in by a parent.** Please support Parking Lot procedures to ensure the safety of every child! Please see map on the facing page for proper movement in parking lots before and after class. Always follow the directional arrows painted on the parking lot pavement. Side doors (accessed from Lots A & B) will be unlocked 15 minutes before class begins—(4:15 for 4:30 session/ 6:00 for 6:15 session.) Please be prompt—always be sure class is in session before leaving your child in the building! Students may not enter classrooms unless a teacher/aide is in the room; if no adult is present in the room, students are expected to wait quietly in the hall outside the classroom until the teacher or teacher's aide arrives. Side doors are locked 5 minutes after class time begins; after that, hall monitors must let you in. Please try to avoid tardiness—it is very disruptive to the teacher and all the students in your child's class! Remember, three tardies and/or early pick ups will result in one unexcused absence.

## Departure

Drive-by pick up is not permitted. Please PARK and escort your child out of the building. ONLY doors to Lot A & B are unlocked; center and wing doors are locked at all times. **Older children may dismiss to a younger child's classroom only if parent submits a "Permission-to-Dismiss" Form to the older child's teacher, but must wait there to be picked up. Students in grades K - Grade 5 never leave the building without an adult escort.** **Students in Grades 6-8 may walk out of the building unescorted. However, they may not walk out of the building unescorted by a parent or guardian with younger siblings.** For early pick up, see early pick up section for details. After the dismissal bell, hall monitors allow access to classroom halls. Please exit the building by the side doors. Wing Doors or Center Doors may not be used to exit. While these protocols may be inconvenient, they are required to ensure the safety of all children entering or leaving the building/accessing parking lots. If these protocols are not respected, more inconvenient measures may be required.



## Early Pick up

Early pick up is discouraged except for serious reasons. Three early pick ups without a legitimate reason will result in one unexcused absence. A reason must be given on the sign out sheet to be considered excused. If absolutely necessary to take your child before dismissal, park your car and come into the RE office to sign out your child. Staff or a hall monitor will bring your child to the RE office. Parents may not go into classroom hallways. For security reasons, only RE Program personnel and compliant volunteers on duty are permitted in the building during class times.

## Late Pick Up

If your child is not picked up at dismissal, teachers are instructed to take your child to the RE Office, where parents and/or emergency contacts are called. The child must remain in the RE Office until the parent comes to the RE Office to pick them up. If there are repeated late pick ups, a fee will be charged. **Middle school children can not remain outside waiting for a late pick up by a parent. They must remain inside the middle school wing doors until the parent arrives.**

## Homework

Students are expected to complete homework assignments in the Activity Book each week from the chapter(s) taught in class. RE teachers may complete several of the pages with students during class each week. Whatever pages not completed in class must be completed as homework. Homework is designed to reinforce material taught in class and to prepare students for material to be presented at the next class. With only one hour and fifteen minutes a week, class time is very precious and must be used wisely. Keeping current on assignments is one way to maximize class time, so please encourage your child to complete homework while making this an opportunity to share in their learning about the Faith. The greatest witness to the Faith a child can receive is the parent's faithful devotion to our beliefs, practices, and customs. If your child is asked to turn in their activity book and will either be absent or out of town, someone else must bring it to the RE office on or prior to the due date. Occasionally parents may be asked to sign the activity book page.

## Discipline

Religious Education students are expected to treat teachers, adults, and peers, as well as all private and Church property, with respect and Christian charity. Our goals of teaching the Faith and inspiring the Love of God and neighbor are serious endeavors that call everyone to practice what is being taught. Every student who disrupts class, behaves in a disrespectful or un-Christian manner, or damages private or Church property, receives a verbal reprimand from the teacher. If two or more reprimands are required, the student is removed from the classroom and sent to the RE Office. If the situation continues, the student's parents will be called to confer with the DRE. Every year, Saint Theresa School students' and teachers' desks, books, supplies, property, and class projects have been tampered with or damaged during RE class times. No one may use or tamper with anything in Saint Theresa School students' or teachers' desks or displays that belong to School personnel. Anything damaged or removed by a RE student must be returned/replaced by whomever is responsible. Craft materials must be cleaned up before the class ends, desks must be wiped down and returned to School configuration.

## Electronic Devices

Students are **not permitted** to bring electronic devices or hand held toys to the RE class. Any student bringing Blackberries, Cell phones, I-Touch and other such devices will be confiscated by the Teacher and returned at the end of class.

## Sacramental Preparations

Students in “Sacramental Years” preparing for First Penance and First Holy Communion in Grades 1 and 2, and students preparing for Confirmation in Grades 7, 8, and 9, are expected to faithfully attend weekly classes, and demonstrate the practice of their Faith attending Sunday Mass weekly. Parents of students with habitual or consecutive absences from class will be required to discuss the child’s readiness to receive Sacraments that year with Mr. Bayne. Additional testing in this case may be required, or the grade may need to be repeated.

### 7th and 8th Grade Testing and Activity Books

All 7th and 8th grade students will be evaluated for the year based on their completion of the required pages in their *Chosen* student workbook, a Quiz packet compiled from chapters in the *Faith and Life* text book, and two major tests each year.

## Confirmation Requirements

Confirmation at St. Theresa Parish takes place in the Fall of 9th grade. Successful completion of 7th and 8th grade requirements are prerequisites. Students preparing for Confirmation are required to write a saint report, perform a Works of Mercy Project and spiritual activity, write a letter of intention to the Bishop, attend a Confirmation retreat, be interviewed by a parish priest (with a parent present), and demonstrate a basic knowledge of the Faith by completing several in-class assignments, and homework. Timeline of requirements is given at the Parent’s Meeting while students are in 7th grade; for further information on all aspects of the Confirmation preparation, contact the RE Office. Students and their parents are encouraged to see Confirmation not as “graduation” from childhood but as a threshold of grace that leads to an adult understanding of the Faith, a process of learning and growing in the Spirit that needs to be continued throughout adult life, and an authentic witness to the Truth that will bear fruit in building up the Church in the world.

***Please Note: The major Confirmation requirements listed above need to be turned in by the due dates, or additional assignments may be assigned. Requirements can be turned in to the student’s teacher, directly to the Religious Education Office during regular office hours Monday through Friday, or sent in by email via an attachment to [lbayne@sainttheresaparish.com](mailto:lbayne@sainttheresaparish.com)***

## Youth Ministry

All High School students are welcome to participate in our parish’s Youth Ministry Upper Room Squad. The program is held weekly on Sundays from 6:00-8:00 pm. Our Youth Ministry program reaches out to young people through relational ministry, meeting teens “where they are” to help them understand various aspects of the Catholic Faith and its relevance to their lives. The methods used to this end include small groups, where young people, guided by an adult leader, reflect upon and grow in their faith. The weekly program begins with fellowship time, followed by formation and instruction on the topic of the week. In addition to the Weekly Sunday evening program, teens are also encouraged to participate in different social activities and service projects, such as the Diocesan WorkCamp, throughout the year. If you have a High School student, please encourage them to participate.

***PLEASE NOTE: All 9th grade students are strongly encouraged to participate in the Youth Ministry program as they prepare for Confirmation.***



## Formation in Christian Chastity

All Catholic schools and religious education programs in the Diocese of Arlington must include this program in their curricula. Created by the Diocese of Harrisburg, PA, it focuses on using the virtue of chastity to teach children about safe environment issues and the sanctity of human persons. Designed to be parent-centered in its approach to the teaching of these issues, it includes parent resources at every grade level, adding classroom components for Grades 1—8. At Saint Theresa Parish, all classroom lessons are taught on Chastity Formation Week (October 2nd through the 5th).

## Home Schooling

Any homeschooling in the RE Program is strictly on a case-by-case basis for those families who either already homeschool their children in academic subjects or who have very serious reasons, such as terminal illness in the family. In Sacramental grades (1, 2, 7, 8, 9), homeschooling is especially discouraged.

Temporary homeschooling is NOT allowed! Any student unable to consistently attend their Religious Education class due to another extracurricular activity (sporting events, school plays, competitive dance, etc.) must sign up for homeschooling through the end of the year. Class change requests may NOT be submitted due to extracurricular activities. **Students with 4-7 unexcused absences at the end of the RE school year will be required to turn in their Activity Book to the RE Office in order to be checked for completion, to see if they are prepared to go on to the next grade level. Students with 8 or more unexcused absences at the end of the RE school year will need to repeat their current grade the following year.**

Those interested in homeschooling their children in the Saint Theresa Parish RE Program must complete a Homeschool Agreement, available at the RE Office. Homeschooled children are enrolled in the Program, pay regular tuition, and receive the same textbook and activity book as the other Program participants. Parents may supplement these texts with additional materials if they would like, but must include our designated textbook series in the homeschool lessons, and turn in the activity book at the end of the year with every page completed. Also, at the end of the school year, homeschooled students must demonstrate their knowledge of the material in the textbook with an Assessment test administered by the DRE before they can receive credit for that grade and register for next year.

## Child Safety Program

The Diocese of Arlington mandates a program of safe-environment and abuse awareness training to ensure protection for children in parish-sponsored activities. Volunteers will receive an email of acceptance with a link to fill out the proper forms on line for compliancy. Once the forms are submitted, you'll receive an email asking you to open up the document and sign the forms for completion. Then they will be electronically sent to the Parish Child Safety Coordinator located in the RE Office for review and then forwarded to the Chancery. At this time the volunteer will need to come to the RE Office to sign the VA Department of Social Services/ CPS Form. You'll need your ID as this form must be notarized and Constance Gilligan, the Parish Child Safety Coordinator is a Notary. Upon completion of the online application, you must register for the VIRTUS Seminar and attend within 45 days. Otherwise you may not be able to volunteer in any capacity until you attend the mandatory seminar. Please go to [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org) to register and sign up for the course. You will physically go to the facility that is hosting it. Remember to sign in on the sign in sheet that is provided by the Facilitator. That is your record of attendance. If you don't sign the sheet, you won't get credit for it. If you don't see your name

on the sheet, print your name and sign your name. It may also list on the sheet where you're volunteering. If it does, note that information as well. All volunteer positions in the Parish must have the required Diocesan online documents processed and cleared prior to volunteering.

### **Prayer Support**

Every spiritual endeavor that seeks to bear spiritual fruit needs prayer support! Please keep the RE Program, RE teachers and volunteers, priests and staff, and, of course, our children, in your daily prayers and sacrifices. With God on our side, we cannot fail!