

SAINT THERESA ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Religious Education Handbook



19 Rosemond Terrace

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religious@sttheresatrumbull.org

Office Hours Monday - Friday 9:30am-3:30pm

Clergy

Rev. Brian P. Gannon, S.T.D., Pastor

Rev. Peter Anumaka, Parochial Vicar

Rev. Christopher J. Perrella, Parochial Vicar

Deacon Gerald M. Lambert

Director of Religious Education

Mrs. Nancy Lombardo

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Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Jodi Angiolillo

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Religious Education Program at Saint Theresa Church. It is our mission to assist you, as primary educators, in fulfilling the promises you made at your child's baptism. You accepted the obligation to nurture your child in the Catholic Faith and help prepare and participate in the sacramental life of the Church. As partners in this mission our goal is to help draw families into a deeper relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Please take a few moments to read the following information with your child. It is difficult to address every situation in this booklet, so if at any time you have a question or concern, please feel free to call our office, myself or our Pastor.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Parents:

- Faith Formation should be the top priority in your family's life as it prepares us for eternity!
- Ensure that your child attends Mass regularly on Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation.
- Ensure that your children attend classes regularly and on time.
- Be an active participant in your child's learning by teaching prayers, discussing materials sent home, attend parent meetings and other events that will serve to enhance your child's faith formation.
- Pray together daily.

Student Expectations

- Students are expected to have their textbook, activity book, folder and pen or pencil at every class. Grades 6 - 9 must also bring their Breakthrough Bible.
- Respect and courtesy towards Catechists and classmates are always required. Disrespectful behavior towards Catechists or classmates will not be tolerated.
- Behavior that disrupts the class will not be tolerated.
- Behavior that impedes the welfare of the class will not be tolerated.
- Be respectful of the property in the classroom and in the desk where they sit. No material from the school should be used for any reason. Any damage to school property will be charged to parents.
- Any physical contact by one student to another will result in immediate removal from class and parents will be contacted.
- No eating, drinking, or chewing gum in the classrooms.
- **Cell phone use during class time is not permitted.** Grades 7, 8, 9 will have a box to collect cell phones at the beginning of class. The cell phones must be turned off. The cell phones will be returned at the end of class. **If this policy is not adhered to the Catechist will take the phone and return it to the student/parent at the end of class.**
- Students who disregard the rules set forth by the Catechist and program will be posed with certain consequences:
 - First incident:
 - First Offense: Verbal warning
 - Second Offense: Verbal warning
 - Third Offense: Student to be sent out of class to DRE. The DRE will telephone parents to report behavior.
 - Second incident:
 - First Offense: Verbal warning
 - Second Offense: Student to be sent out of class to DRE. The DRE will set up meeting with parents. Student is not to return to class before this meeting.
 - Third incident:
 - First Offense: Verbal warning
 - Second Offense: Student to be sent out of class to DRE. The DRE will set up a meeting with parents and Father Gannon where we will determine if our program is a good fit for your child.

Dress Code for all Participants:

- Everyone is expected to wear modest clothing.
- No lowcut tops, see through garments, spaghetti straps, muscle shirts or shirts that bare midriffs.
- Shorts and skirts must be an appropriate length.
- No emblems, badges, slogans that distract or disrupt.
- No cleats
- No hats or hoodies
- Students who are dressed inappropriately will be removed from the class and parents will be contacted.

Registration

All students and their families must be registered with St. Theresa Parish.

New Families/Students

Please register with the Rectory Office first. Their office hours are Monday-Friday from 8:30am-4:30pm and can be reached at 203-261-3676.

- Once registered, please register in person at the Religious Education Office with the following documentation: Baptismal certificate and if applicable, record of previous religious education and Sacraments received.
- Children (in grade 2-9) will be placed in a grade corresponding to their grade in school, provided they have successfully completed prior Religious education classes.

Please Note: In order to receive the Sacraments in a timely manner with their peers, all students must be **continually enrolled** in a Catholic School or Religious Education Program since first grade.

Registration Period: JULY 1 - AUGUST 31st

- Forms can be obtained on the Parish website:
www.sttheresatrumbull.org/catholic-teaching
- See K-9 Registration form for class times and tuition rates
- For students in Grades K-5, an Authorized Pick-Up form must be completed and accompany your registration.
- Payment plans are available for anyone experiencing financial hardship. A 30% down payment is required, followed by 3-4 monthly payments until balance is paid. Call DRE at 203-261-4706 to make arrangements.
- All parents must complete the Diocesan Consent and Release Form for each child.

Sacramental Preparation

The Sacramental years are as follows:

Sacrament of First Reconciliation – 2nd Grade

Sacrament of First Holy Communion – 3rd Grade

Confirmation Preparation – 7th and 8th Grade

Sacrament of Confirmation – 9th Grade

Students must attend religious education classes in order to receive the Sacraments. Details of requirements will be discussed at the parent meetings held in the Fall.

Mass Attendance Policy

As we are preparing your children to receive the Sacraments, we want to remind you that inseparable from commitment to the Sacraments, is commitment to Holy Mass every Sunday.

A commitment to weekly Sunday Mass is really a response of true love for Our Lord first. Otherwise, when receiving the Sacraments, the lack of Sunday Mass commitment demonstrates secondary or

less priority for God. We do realize many children have much more maturing in the faith ahead of them, but minimal requirements such as weekly Sunday Mass are meant by God to precisely facilitate that maturing process.

For the Sacramental years (grades 2, 3, 7, 8, 9) we require weekly Sunday (Saturday Vigil) Mass attendance. After your child attends Mass, have them pick up a bulletin to have the Priest sign or stamp it. Returned signed bulletin with your child's full name and grade to their Catechist.

Attendance Policy

- Students are expected to attend all classes mid- September to mid- May, approximately 28 hours in total. A short time considering the everlasting benefits that can be learned.
- Please report all absences to the Religious Education Office by 3pm of your child's class day. Please include the reason for the absence. Please call the office 203-261-4706 or email cre@sttheresatrumbull.org.
- If a student has more than four unexcused absences, except for an unexpected serious situation such as an illness or a family emergency, the year may need to be repeated.
- With every absence, the work is to be made up.
Please consult the Catechist. When your child returns to class please ask your Catechist for the missed lesson and assignment. All make up work is to be submitted to the Catechist by the next class.
- Early pick-ups are discouraged, however if absolutely necessary a **written notice** must be given to the Religious Education office, before class begins. When picking up your child, please enter through the main entrance and report to the DRE or Hall Monitor. Please do not go directly to the classroom. Catechists will not dismiss the student unless you are accompanied by the DRE/Hall Monitor.

- It is important to keep our records updated. If your child becomes ill or injured during class time, we will call you at the numbers that are on file.

Dismissal Policy

Grades K-5:

- For your child's safety, all doors will remain locked until @ five minutes before dismissal.
- During inclement or cold weather, parents/guardians may remain in the *main lobby area only*.
- Students must be signed out by a parent/guardian or designated adult approved by the parent/guardian and who is listed on the "Authorized Pick-Up Form".
- Parents who would like to volunteer are required to take a Protecting God's Children – VIRTUS training class.

Students are not permitted to leave the building unescorted.

Please note: Please do not park in the front of the school, along the sidewalk, this area is for emergency vehicles only.

Grades 6-9

- Students will be dismissed to the front foyer/sidewalk area.
- Parent/Guardians must meet their child and escort them to their car.
- If you must remain in your car, please form a **single lane** of traffic, entering from Rosemond Terrace and keeping the school on your right.
- Cars parked in the parking spaces, please exit left, in a counter clock-wise direction.
- No child may leave the building unless accompanied by an adult. This includes children walking to cars or to a *nearby home*.

Additional Programs

- **Home Study**: It is strongly recommended that our students attend one of our regularly scheduled classes. Home Study is only allowed for medical or other serious extenuating circumstances during non-Sacramental years only (grade 1 and grades 4-6)

Requirements

- Request must be in writing.
- Proof of medical reason or other extenuating circumstance is required.
- All students in Home Study must attend FOUR required review sessions, beginning in October.
- At these sessions we will review workbook activities, take-home tests, and required prayers.
- All work must be completed by the last review session in order to proceed to the next grade level.
- Tuition fees are the same.

If a student has missed **one** year of religious education this may be made up while attending regular classes. This will require students to attend four review sessions for the material they are making up as well as weekly attendance in their regularly scheduled class. **Tuition is in full for the class the child attends plus an additional fee for the make-up class.**

- **R.C.I.C. (Rite of Christian Initiation for Children)**: If your child is beyond the age of reason (seven years old) and in Grades 3-12 who have not yet been baptized or who have been baptized Catholic but not yet received Reconciliation/Communion please contact the Religious Education office for more information.

Volunteer Opportunities

This program could not survive without the dedicated volunteers who have heard God's call to spread the Good News to others – we are incredibly grateful to them! Please prayerfully consider one of the following:

- Catechists (adults only)
- Substitute Catechists (adults only)
- Catechist Aides (adults and teens Grades 7-12)
- Hall Monitors (adults only)
- Office Help (adults and teens)

Please call the office if you are interested or have any questions – we would love to speak with you.

Volunteer Forms can be found on the Parish website:

www.sttheresatrumbull.org/catholic-teaching

Thank you for your trust and confidence in our Religious Education Program, as we assist you, the parents, first and foremost educators of the faith for your children.

It is our great honor and joy to be evangelizing our parish families, in a community that puts faith first, always mindful that we are first and foremost....

“EDUCATING FOR ETERNITY”

And remember

BE A SAINT! WHAT ELSE IS THERE

Updated 6/6/24