



**St. Teresa of Calcutta  
Formation & Discipleship  
Parent Handbook  
2022-2023**



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***Please remember to notify the Formation & Discipleship  
Office of any absences @ 966-7010 ext. 125***

Dear Formation & Discipleship Families,

First, we would like a minute to thank each of you for making the commitment to continue to develop and strengthen your child's faith. Nurturing our children's faith is a lifetime commitment and takes a village to build. We are happy to be part of your child's village and helping you to develop their faith.

This year our theme is " **This is my body given for you.**"

We would like to offer our gratitude to you, who make yourselves continually available to our program and to the wonderful catechists who witness their faith to our children, teens and adults! Your time and dedication is inspiring and true testament to our faith.

Blessings as we start another year of grace, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Stephanie Haizel for high school questions, Jen Ishizaki for Preschool and grade school questions, Denise Wiskow for middle school questions, or Lisa for general questions regarding the program.

Jennifer Ishizaki  
Coordinator Pre-5th Grade

Denise Wiskow  
Coordinator-Middle School

Stephanie Haizel  
High School & Young Adult Ministry

## Philosophy and Objectives

The purpose of religious education is to enable students to reach their potential as individuals who are created in God's image. As such, our program tries to assist and enhance what is being taught in the home and to provide religious direction for students so they can share their talents, and proclaim the message of Christ to others.

Our goal for the St. Teresa of Calcutta Formation & Discipleship Team is to promote the growth of each student's sacred faith. We try to provide an experience of community that teaches, lives, sustains, and supports that faith in Christ. In our Formation & Discipleship program we try to nurture in our students:

- \* an awareness of God in themselves and others;
- \* an appreciation of the meaning of the Sacraments and most important a belief in the True Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist;
- \* the importance of the Sunday liturgy;
- \* a love for God's Word and an understanding of Sacred Scripture;
- \* a formation of conscience and Catholic values that will foster Catholic living;
- \* a concept of Catholic community, that spreads the message "Jesus lives in us" through service to others; and
- \* the call to be intentional disciples (followers) of Jesus

# **St. Teresa of Calcutta Formation & Discipleship**

## **Policies & Expectations**

The St. Teresa of Calcutta Formation & Discipleship (F & D) Team has the following policies and expectations in place as recommended by our Archdiocese.

### **1. Registration**

Registration for all students currently registered St. Teresa of Calcutta families will be sent to the families. Complete registration and forms should be returned to the Formation & Discipleship Office ASAP in order to ensure placement in the classes requested. You may download forms from

<http://stteresaofcalcutta.org/christian-formation/forms/>

### **Non-Parish Member Families**

Families that do not belong to St. Teresa of Calcutta, but wish to participate in our F & D Program, must provide the office with a letter of acknowledgement, signed by their Parish pastor. This letter lets us know that both parishes have a common understanding about where the children are being educated.

### **Parish Member Families Registering in another Religious Education Program**

In certain situations it may be necessary for a parish member to register their child in a program other than St. Teresa of Calcutta. Please contact one of the Coordinators of F & D who will work with the Parish Director and send a letter acknowledging you are registering your child with another parish program.

### **2. Tuition**

At St. Teresa of Calcutta, we offer families the following options for payment of fees for religious education: payment in full at the time of registration or half at registration and the other half by 1-31-2023. Confidential consultation about special financial needs and plans for payment can be made by calling the Business Office. The registration fees are collected from families to help offset a part of the F & D budget. There is a break in tuition for families with 4+ children. Those families will pay for the oldest three children and any other children will be at “no charge.” The tuition listed below is subject to review and change at the end of each fiscal year. These are the 2022-2023 tuition amounts:

Preschool & Kindergarten	\$135.00 per child
Grades 1-5	\$135.00 per child
Grades 6-7-8	\$135.00 per child
Grades 9-10	\$135.00 per child
Grade 11-Confirmation	\$135.00 per child*

*\* There will be a separate retreat fee that will be **billed** at the time of retreat.*

### 3. Attendance

Regular attendance at religious education classes is an important factor in deepening a child's understanding of our triune God through the study of Scripture, prayer, Church teaching, and community. The determination of readiness to participate at any given level of the formal F & D education program must take into account the following factors:

#### **Consecutive Yearly Participation—Homeschooling**

Consecutive yearly participation in the F & D Program at our parish is the ideal. However, we also know that it is the parent's obligation to involve their children in the life and mission of the Church which they promised at Baptism along with support from the parish. Attending Mass weekly *and* attending faith formation classes helps the children gain knowledge in the faith traditions to become stronger disciples of Jesus. There may be reasons where regular yearly attendance in our program is not possible. If this is the case, the parents will meet with the Coordinators to receive/review the necessary approved homeschooling materials.

#### **Absences**

According to the F & D Team, formal instruction can only be effective if the student maintains yearly attendance. In order to ensure that the children in the program master the grade level material, it is important to that students attend the scheduled classes. Excessive absences will be addressed with parents, students and the coordinator and students will be given the opportunity to make up missed classes.

## Safeguarding All God's Family

### Policy for 2022-2023

With the continued concern for the safety of our children and teens, the parish center will be locked at all times. Through a gift in memory of Betty Quadracci, we have installed an intercom system with a camera on the main doors of the parish center. In order for parents/visitors to gain access, you will need to be "buzzed" into the building. Since the children will be coming to F & D classes after Mass, all are to enter the Parish Center via the door off of Highway 83 that leads into Clare Hall. At the end of class, students will depart the Parish Center through the front doors off of the parking lot once their parent pulls up to the door. Families will be given a family name "card" which they will show the coordinator at the door. Students from each family will be called from their classroom via the PA system. High School students will leave class when it is over and meet their families, if applicable in the parking lot.

Also, in the event of an absence, it will be necessary for a parent to call the F & D Office at 966-7010, ext. 125 before class time. If a student must leave early, a note must be given to the catechist at the start of class. Parents must come to the class to pick up their child in pre-3 through 5th grade. Children will not be allowed to leave the classroom without a parent or other designated adult. High school students that drive to and from class must have a written note before they may leave early. The Office reserves the right to verify the note with a phone call to the parents.

#### 4. Conduct

Remembering first and foremost that when in Church students must always be respectful and reverent. The following rules will be used in the classroom:

1. Students are to show respect for everyone, including himself or herself.
2. Students are to respect the authority of all adults.
3. Students are to behave in a manner which does not interfere with the good learning environment necessary for Formation & Discipleship
4. Students are to perform all activities in a safe manner, in order to avoid injury to themselves and others.
5. Students are to treat Church property and the possessions of others carefully.
6. Students are to be at their class on time. Students must be given teacher permission to be out of their assigned classroom.
7. Students are not to bring candy, gum, or beverages to class.

Students who are being disruptive and not following rules will be given one warning. Further disruption of the class will result in the student being asked to leave the group. He/she will be referred to the F & D Office and spend the remainder of the class time in the office working on the lesson of the day. In the event that a catechist needs to remove a student, the Coordinator for the program will contact the student's parents. Any situation that falls outside the parameters of this policy will also be handled by the Coordinator of the program.

## 5. Parental Support

Every Formation & Discipleship Program is only as good as the parent commitment. Parents are asked to ensure that their children: attend classes regularly and on time; communicate any special needs or circumstances that may affect their child within the classroom; be an active part of their children's learning. Sunday Mass attendance is strongly encouraged so you reinforce what is being taught in the classroom. We will be offering parent sessions after Mass in the church on an assortment of interesting subjects.

## 6. Reception of Sacraments at St. Teresa of Calcutta

The American Bishops and Catholic educators have agreed that parent education is more critical than even child education when it comes to the understanding of the Sacraments. The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*, focuses on young people and the whole People of God which is easily taught to children, but often causes confusion or causes possible doubts for some parents. To coordinate the parent or adult-student preparation for the Sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation, and Confirmation we require parents and/or sponsors to participate in their student's preparation.

***To register a student for the preparation process for reception of a Sacrament, the student must have attended a formal F & D program for one year prior to the year in which the Sacrament is received or attended a Catholic school. For Confirmation the teens must attend 9th and 10th grade prior to joining the Confirmation program in 11th grade or have attended a Catholic school.***

## **Celebrating First Holy Communion and Confirmation at your Parish**

As per the Archdiocesan guidelines all children celebrating the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion are to receive those sacraments with their faith community—at the Parish Church. So, if your child is attending a Catholic grade school, they will receive instruction in the classroom at the school and then they will be included in all our activities outside of classroom instruction, i.e., Commitment Mass, Retreat, etc., here at the parish and will then receive the Sacrament with their parish family at St. Teresa of Calcutta.

Confirmation candidates attending Catholic high school are per Archdiocesan guidelines *required* to participate in the Confirmation program at their parish and will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation with their parish family.



# Sacraments

Children must learn that God is part of their lives. Sacraments help children to realize, by external rites and signs, that God loves them in special ways and in important moments of life. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God's grace is poured into the hearts of those who are participating in the sacrament.

## Baptism

Through our Baptism we are called to share in the life of Christ, which means that we are to participate in the sacramental life of the Church and to share in Christ's mission. As baptized members of the Church, the Holy Spirit calls us to be people of prayer, to respect and obey our leaders, and to serve others—to share Christ's mission by being living signs of the Kingdom of God.

## Reconciliation

Sin is the hard reality of life by which we turn our back on God's love and offend one another. It requires reconciliation and healing. A child must know from the beginning that there is no offense which cannot be forgiven. This beautiful Sacrament of mercy assures the child that he can return to God through simple sorrow within his heart and the outward sign of confessing his sins.

Christ wants it this way. He insists that we acknowledge sinfulness, but He continually offers peace, forgiveness, reconciliation to those who come to Him. This coming to Him is the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## First Holy Communion

The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament of the reception of the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. It is the real presence of Jesus by which a child comes to understand that God nourishes us with Divine Life and makes us one with other Catholics, with the Church, and with Christ Himself. The reception of the Body and Blood of Christ for the first time is an important event in a child's life.

The Church asks from the child only that which he/she is capable of giving, that is faith in God and a genuine desire to experience the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

The Church asks the parents to be open to a partnership of preparation between the parish community, the religious education program, and the parents of the other candidates for First Holy Communion.

## Confirmation

The reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. Because of Confirmation we have a better understanding of the Holy Spirit and the gifts he brings into our life. Confirmation builds on the gifts you have already received, and brings you more closely into relationship with God. The Sacrament of Confirmation takes place during their junior year of high school. For additional information about Confirmation see page 13.

## Holy Matrimony

The sacrament of Matrimony is the foundation for the Christian family. The family is the domestic Church, or the Church of the home. From the beginning the Bible teaches that marriage (Matrimony) is part of God's plan. God created men and women so that the two would compliment each other and form a natural union in which love would be shared. The sacramental marriage unity is the understanding that no matter what happens in their lives, they will always love and cherish each other and they will have no other person come between them.

## Anointing of the Sick

There is no limit to the number of times you can receive this sacrament. You should contact a priest if someone is in danger of death, if they are seriously ill or advanced in years. Many people receive the sacrament before a surgery. The priest uses the oil of the sick, which has been blessed by the bishop and anoints the sick person on the forehead and hands and prays the prayer of healing. Our Saint Vincent DePaul society offers a healing Mass to which all are invited.

## Holy Orders

The sacrament is called Holy Orders because it is a way of consecrating, or making holy, people for three orders of ministry in the Church: bishops, priests, and deacons. The rite of the sacrament is called ordination. As celebrants of the Eucharist, the source and summit of our faith, priests and bishops represent Christ, the high priest.

## **Description of Programs**

### **Preschool/Kindergarten Grades K3 - K4 - K 5**

Our preschool and Kindergarten program meets Sunday from 10:00-11:45 a.m. (or the conclusion of the 9 a.m. Mass) in the Parish Center. The children will take part in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd which is child centered or activities that use many of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd materials.

The child, particularly the religious life of the child, is central to the interest and commitment of the Good Shepherd catechist. With this focus, the catechist embraces Maria Montessori's vision of the human being and thus the attitude of the adult regarding the child. An integral part of the experience is an environment called the atrium, which aids in the development of the religious life.

The atrium is a community in which children and adults live together a religious experience which facilitates participation in the wider community of the family, the church and other social spheres. The atrium is a place of prayer, in which work and study spontaneously become meditation, contemplation and prayer.

Twice a month, on class days children 3 years old through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are invited to participate in the Liturgy of the Word. The children will go with you to Mass, then Father or Deacon Allen will invite the kids up where they will process to the lower level of the church to hear the liturgy at their level. The children will return to their families at the collection.

# **Elementary Program**

## **Grades 1-2 - 3 - 4 - 5**

### **(Grades 1, 3, 4, 5)**

The curriculum being used for grades 1, 3-5 is the St. Mary's Press Discover. The curriculum is approved for use by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

This program is designed to help fully engage in the process of discovering and growing in the richness of their Catholic faith. Each lesson is designed to help your child have a clearer understanding of the concepts presented through an active-learning approach. This method brings lessons to life in a fun and memorable way through the experiential and interactive processes. Core principles of faith are introduced in a manner that helps your child to discover meaning and develop understanding while being immersed in solid Catholic teaching and in the prayers and practices that build Catholic identity.

### **Grade 2/First Reconciliation & Communion)**

To help in preparation for their First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion, the curriculum we use is Go Seek Find for both Reconciliation and Eucharist. This program takes the children on a meaningful experienced that will help to pass on the truth and beauty of our Catholic faith and the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

## **Middle School Program**

### **Grades 6 - 7 - 8 (Even year)**

*The Middle School Christian Formation Program uses St. Mary's Press curriculum— Catholic Connections. The program includes six fully developed courses that the students will explore throughout 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. In each course the participants use a faith handbook called The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers. Catholic Connections aims to strengthen the participants' Catholic identity and inspire them to participate more fully in the Church's mission, the mission of Jesus Christ. The handbook is a youth-friendly presentation of the Catholic faith. Upon entering 6th grade each student will receive a gift of the Catholic Youth Bible. Students will use their bible during class.*

*6th and 7th Grade - The New Testament, the Church, and the Sacraments* Students learn about how the Church developed as it is revealed in the New Testament of the Bible. They will explore how the Liturgy and Sacraments are celebrations and grow in confidence that going to Mass and receiving the Sacraments have a connection to their daily lives. *Prayer –* Tweens will learn why the Lord's Prayer is the perfect prayer, exploring and reflecting on its meaning in the context of today's world.

*8th Grade – Christian Morality and Justice* invites students to deepen their awareness of themselves as maturing Catholic Christians and presents them with durable, cherished values of the Church. Prayer teaches how prayer is essential to our relationship with God and is an ongoing conversation with God. The Christian Morality and Justice portion from the handbook will be largely supplemented by *Connected: Catholic Social Teaching for this Generation*. Developed by Ascension Press this 5 session series opens the minds and hearts of Catholic teens to the truth and beauty of the Church's social teaching. Sessions are *God's Creation & Stewardship; The Dignity of Human Life; Solidarity Race and Responsibilities; Poverty & Dignity of Work; Family: The Foundation of Society.*

*Character and Faith: Growing Up Catholic mini-retreats* are part of our middle school program. These retreats are designed to help children develop the understandings, attitudes, values, and strength of character they will need as they enter their teen years. We want to prepare them to make positive, moral, faith-filled decisions now and in the future. The series of retreats (one for each year of middle school) are specifically designed for our Christian Formation program and will satisfy the "Safe Environment Education" (pg. 12) mandated by the Bishops of the United States (see calendar on page 16).

*Parental involvement is crucial to the success of the program. You are welcome and encouraged to participate with your child(ren) in any classroom lessons, various service projects and prayer services. Parents of middle school students will be scheduled in the classroom of their child once during the school year.*

*Service Projects/Field Trips – see calendar for dates*

*Grade 6, 7 & 8    Catholic Ecology Center*

*Sr. Citizen Spaghetti Dinner*

*Grade 8 only*

*Visit St. Vincent de Paul (store and food pantry)*

## **St. Teresa Life Teen**

9th and 10th grade

This program is a dynamic and engaging program to help teens grow in relationship with Jesus as they also learn their Catholic faith. It provides small groups for teens to ask questions, find answers and begin to discover how to put their faith in action. Our core team of small group leaders help provide opportunities for the teens to encounter Christ in the sacraments and walk the journey of faith with the teens.

There will be a retreat in the spring as part of the high school program. The retreats is designed to help teens further develop the understandings, attitudes, values, and strength of character they will need as they navigate their teen years and further develop a relationship with Jesus.



## **Confirmation**

The Confirmation program walks with candidates on their faith journey, helping them answer big questions of faith, encounter Jesus in the Sacraments and create relationships. They will be encouraged on their faith journey with small group discussions, as well as meetings with their sponsors and parents. The curriculum used for Confirmation is called Purpose. Purpose is a transformative approach to confirmation and provides a foundational and evangelistic approach while accompanying the teens as they become disciples. The curriculum addresses three big questions, "Why believe in God?", "Why trust Jesus?" and "Why be a part of the Church?"

A retreat is required for Confirmation. Information for the retreat will be on the website under the Confirmation page.

Important note: Students attending Catholic High School need not attend 9th grade Christian Formation classes at St. Teresa of Calcutta but must enroll in the parish's Confirmation program in 10th & 11th grade. Per the Archdiocesan guidelines, the Sacrament of Confirmation is to be received at your parish. Those teens not attending Catholic High School must attend both the 9th and 10th grade Christian Formation programs in preparation for the Confirmation program in 11th grade.



## Other Programs Offered

### St. Teresa of Calcutta Workcamp, July 8th –16th 2023

Workcamp is a mission trip where teens and adults come together to serve individuals and communities while building strong, long-lasting relationships with their friends and youth leaders. In six short days, hundreds of teenagers from youth groups across the country repair and transform homes while growing closer to Jesus. This is a great opportunity to meet new people, serve others, grow in your faith and have a blast doing so! Many students and adults say it's the best week of their summer! For more information contact Steph Haizel @ [steph.haizel@stteresaofcalcutta.org](mailto:steph.haizel@stteresaofcalcutta.org).

### Vacation Bible School, July 17th-21st, 2023

Our Vacation Bible School will be held from July 17th-21st from 9 a.m to noon. It is designed to give children an opportunity to know Jesus better through stories, songs, games, crafts and sharing. Children from all denominations are invited—ages 3 through completion of 4th grade. VBS relies on and is made possible with the time and talent of volunteers. Parishioners assist in leading our littlest ones through this wonderful week. If you are interested in working on our VBS program, please call the F & D Office.

### Special Education

Every child at St. Teresa of Calcutta has a right to religious education in some form. If you would like to make arrangements for F & D for someone with special needs, please call the F & D Office at 966-7010.

### Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), Adult Confirmation

If you are an adult (over 18) and have not been baptized and would like to become Catholic or are Catholic and haven't yet been confirmed and would like to be, please call Deacon Allen at 966-2191 ext. 105.

## **2022-2023 Obligatory Holy Days of Obligation**

11/1	<i>All Saints' Day</i>
12/8	<i>Feast of Immaculate Conception</i>
12/25	<i>Christmas</i>
1/1	<i>Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God</i>
5/18	<i>Ascension of Jesus</i>
8/15	<i>Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>

### **Important Mass Dates**

2/22	Ash Wednesday
4/6	Holy Thursday
4/7	Good Friday Service
4/8	Easter Vigil (Sundown)
4/9	Easter Sunday

### **Other Important Date**

5/14	May Crowning 9am Mass
5/21	Graduation Mass 9am

