

**St. Therese of Lisieux Parish
Shelby Township, MI**

**Religious (In) Formation
Handbook**



**Please keep this information
for
reference throughout the year.**

(Revision 6/11)

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Welcome to St. Therese of Lisieux Parish Religious Formation Program

We are happy you have chosen us to nurture and assist you in fulfilling your responsibility in educating your child in his/her faith.

We hope this guidebook answers many of your questions regarding our program. Please read this booklet carefully and discuss it with your child so that you both may understand our procedures and realize our expectations.

St. Therese of Lisieux Mission Statement

We, the Catholic Community centered in Shelby Township under the name of St. Therese of Lisieux are gathered in the name of Jesus Christ to worship as a warm welcoming community, to evangelize especially to those estranged or alienated, and to share our time, treasure, and talent in service to people of our community.

GOALS OF CATECHESIS:

What is Catechesis?

Catechesis is an official ministry of the Catholic Church, which centers on sharing the Gospel message, presenting Christian values and principles, building community and leading people into service and prayer.

PARENTAL OBLIGATION:

You are the primary educators of your children!

It is important that parents create an environment which can foster and grow Christian values and attitudes.

Parent's participation in adult faith enrichment programs provide strong examples of ongoing Christian faith formation.

*We invite parents to observe and participate in their child's class at any time.

*Please visit our Resource Center for literature, videos, and pamphlets of educational information for yourself and your children's needs.

The child needs to experience his/her faith life through the family. Faithful participation at weekly liturgy, frequent celebrations of the sacraments (or observance of the family doing so) and active participation in G.I.F.T., financial support and interest in parish community life and activities help fully develop the young Catholic.

PRACTICE brings lessons to life!

FAITH FORMATION/ACADEMICS

As primary educators of our faith, it is important that parents help children with their class preparation and faith development.

- Have them read the lesson for the coming week to insure better class participation.
- Teach your child prayers found at the back of the text.
- Complete all family activity sheets together ("Sharing Faith With Our Family worksheets)

Textbooks are required for every class. Teach your child the responsibility by encouraging this practice from the first week of class. If a text is lost you must purchase a new one from the office at your expense.

Yearly, the parish G.I.F.T. program is geared towards the family with faith formation, food, fun activities, and time for both adults and children to grow in their faith. Please support these programs and attend them.

Please support and attend the yearly May Crowning for Our Blessed Mother Mary, here at the parish.

Any special or unique child circumstance should be brought to the attention of the Director of Formation, Sue Juliano.

FACULTY

All catechists are working towards national certification or have already attained Basic Formation status under the Archdiocesan policy on religious education certification.

Catechists are instructed in such areas as theology, the Bible, discipline and teaching techniques. They meet on a regular basis with their grade level coordinators to discuss and share their lessons. Continued enrichment is required annually for those who have completed training and are certified.

All persons working in the program must have attended the **Protecting God's Children** workshop and completed a **Background Check**. Please see the DRE for more details.

RELIGIOUS FORMATION STAFF

Pastor	Rev. Larry Zurawski
Associate Pastor	Rev. Matt Ellis
Director of Formation	Sue Juliano
Administrative Assistant	Bonnie Oleszkowicz
PS/KN Coordinator	Lisa Brown
Section Head for Grades 1-5 & Confirmation	Jacky Yonkowski
Lesson Plan Leaders:	Lisa Larson (Grades 1-2) Claudia Domsic (Grades 3-5) Kathleen Fraylick (Grades 6-8) Cathy Dyke (Grades 6-8)
Coordinator of Jr. High (6th, 7th-8th Grade)	Marie Coules
High School Youth (9th-12th Grade)	Jacki Allor

ATTENDANCE

1st-5th grade—Students attend class regularly. Absences and tardies must be called into the office PRIOR to class (254-4433). For **an absence to be excused** the students must complete the missed lesson as listed in your syllabus and hand in to the teacher at the next class. More than two unexcused absences will require an assessment test to be taken by the student at the end of the year for promotion to the next grade level.

NOTE:

Students whose tardiness or leave early exceeds 15 minutes should do the lesson at home for that class.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Preschool & Kindergarten—gather Sundays during the 9:45 am Mass. Beginning in Fall, through Spring.

Grades 1st-5th—gather weekly beginning in Fall, through Spring. Class times are Monday and Tuesday from 4:30-6 pm and 6:15-7:45 pm.

Grades 6-8 See Article on TRINITY Page

Jr. High Ministry- 6th, 7th and 8th graders are to attend three (3) of the many scheduled Jr. High events as part of their class curriculum.

High School Ministry (S.T.Y.G.)- Meet on Sunday evenings at 7 p.m. All programs and events are opened to any 9th-12th grade student (parishioner or non-parishioner).

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Students in grades 1st-8th must have an adult come to the student's classroom at dismissal through the doors by the restrooms and exit through the hallway at the north end back to the gathering space. All other entrances are locked. We ask that you please park in a legal parking space before entering the building.

THIS IS FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD.

We ask for your cooperation. It is better to be cautious where your child is concerned.

Please pick up ON TIME.

DISCIPLINE

Your student is expected to conduct his/herself in a manner showing respect for his/her teacher and staff, fellow student and the property he/she uses.

Escalation for discipline problems:

- ❖ If your child exhibits uncontrollable behavior he/she will be removed from class and sent to the office to complete the lesson.
- ❖ Second offense with no improvement in behavior will require a phone call to the parents to ask their support in correcting the situation.
- ❖ Third offense will require your attendance in your student's scheduled class.

Please remind your children that NO toys, games, toy-like weapons or cell phones are allowed in the classroom. No gum is allowed and we ask that all children remove hats while in the church building.

CURRICULUM/TEXTBOOKS

Preschool/Kindergarten Stories of God's Love series from RCL Benzinger.
Grades 1st-5th Sadlier series, "We Believe". It is designed to help the whole family grow in their faith life.
Grades 6-8 Youth Bible and Catholic Faith Handbook
Home study for Grade 1-6 RCL series "Faith First", Legacy Edition.

FEES

\$65.00 Registration fee per student.
\$125.00 Confirmation (9th Grade)

Full payment is expected at time of registration. We do accept partial payments (minimum of \$20.00 per student) until balance is paid in full by December of the current year.

Any concerns regarding payment should be made to the DRE.
Please do not forfeit a year of your child's formation because of financial hardship. We will work diligently with you to resolve any issues you may have in this regard.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Cancellation of classes follow the decision made by **Utica Community Schools**. If the weather is bad later in the day and classes are still scheduled, *we ask you to use your best judgment as to whether or not to bring your child to class*. Parents should cover the lesson at home whenever a class is cancelled.

We generally follow the Utica Schools vacation breaks, ****except for in-service days.***

Check our website at: www.stthereseaparish.ws for up to date information.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

Baptismal Certificates for all students not baptized at St. Therese of Lisieux are to be submitted to the office at the time of registration. We keep this on file and update for sacramental purposes.

Students preparing for:

First Eucharist and Reconciliation (Grade 2)

Instruction for these Sacraments are presented during there regularly scheduled class time.

Older students will be given texts for preparation at home with parent.

There will be a follow-up workshop for parent and student to complete this sacrament preparation.

***Note:** Please refer to **RE CALENDAR IMPORTANT DATES** or our website www.stthereseeparish.ws for session dates, parent meetings and dates to celebrate First Eucharist and Reconciliation.

Confirmation—9th Grade

This preparation requires 10 sessions of two (2) hours each and an overnight retreat. Students select a Wednesday or Sunday Class time.

Please refer to **RE CALENDAR IMPORTANT DATES** or our website www.stthereseeparish.ws for session dates, parent meetings and dates to celebrate Confirmation.



G.I.F.T.

(Growing In Faith Together)

In addition to our eighteen (18) weeks of classroom time students also participate in three (3) G.I.F.T. gatherings attended by the entire family. Each gathering counts as two (2) classes for the student.

The cost for G.I.F.T. is included in the \$65.00 per student fee. This cost covers the food and materials for the whole family attending G.I.F.T.

Additional extended family members or friends are welcome to join you but they must register separately at a cost of \$5.00 per person not to exceed \$20.00 per household per G.I.F.T. gathering.

At each G.I.F.T. families check in first and receive their home kit materials. The home kit contains information about the topic we are studying and helps the family to continue the conversation at home.

Families also drop off an item indicated on their response card which helps to support the OUTREACH that we have selected for G.I.F.T. We then gather in the social hall to share a meal which is complimented by desserts donated by the families attending that day.

From the Social Hall we move into the church for the opening prayer, followed by age appropriate groups moving off to different areas to learn more about their faith. At various times we may gather adults and students together for a family activity in place of the classroom model.

Surveys are always available to assist us in constantly working to improve on the G.I.F.T process. All are dismissed with a closing prayer.

Students are to be accompanied by their parent (s). They cannot be dropped off or sent with another family.



TRINITY
(6th, 7th and 8th Graders)

Transforming Receiving Igniting Nurturing Infusing Today's Youth

The purpose of TRINITY is to engage the head, hands and heart of every student in the living of their Catholic faith.

Each year students in **6th, 7th and 8th** grade will complete a Track consisting of 9 weeks of two (2) hours sessions. In addition they will need to complete three (3) Junior High Nights.

This will all be considered part of their curriculum along with attendance at **G.I.F.T.** and total class time in the RE program. **Attendance will be recorded.**

In addition to your regular RE registration there will be an additional form for TRINITY students which will include your track selection and your Junior High Night selection.

These are requirements for those students seeking to be candidates for Confirmation in their 9th grade year.



Jr. HIGH MINISTRY (6th, 7th and 8th Graders)

The purpose is to ease the student in their transition from catechism classroom learning to a group setting like Youth Group where learning is an activity and fun.

These are usually scheduled on Fridays, for two (2) hours. The evening will include snacks, prayer and an activity with a formation component.

There is a separate registration form for TRINITY which includes a section to select your Junior High Nights. More than three (3) nights may be selected and a friend is welcome to attend but notice should be given to the Junior High Coordinator prior to the event.

Parents are also requested to sign up for two (2) of their students Junior High Nights as a volunteer. This may involve your time to help chaperone or a donation for snacks.

These are requirements for those students seeking to be candidates for Confirmation in the beginning of their 9th grade year.

Please check the junior high page of the youth ministry website at www.styg.ws for information regarding Jr. High scheduled events

HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

Youth Ministry includes everyone in 9th-12th grades. We invite parishioners and non-parishioners to become involved with all events under youth ministry from liturgical celebrations to Cedar Point trips.

S.T.Y.G. (St. Therese Youth Groupings) is a weekly gathering of teens where we get together for FOOD, FUN, FRIENDS and FAITH! It's all about having a great time and sharing what we believe. We believe in having fun and building community while learning or sharing. This is YOUR Ministry...your God, your culture, it's all about you and HIM!!!

Youth Ministry offers a variety of ways for the high school teen to be active with their faith and involved in their parish community. Some examples are:

- Be active in S.T.Y.G. It encompasses all social outings, leadership building, service and so much more! Come for whatever activities meet your schedule.
- Leadership Workshops
- Teen Council (CORE TEAM) for planning programs and events for STYG.
- Opportunities to minister: Eucharistic Minister, Altar Server, Lector or Usher and assist in the RE classes,
- TRINITY, G.I.F.T. and VBS.
- Opportunities for retreats, pilgrimages and trips.
- Watch for weekly updates in the parish paper or check out the parish website at www.stthereseeparish.ws

If you would like to be on the email distribution list, please contact Jackie Allor at ym@stthereseeparish.ws or 586-254-4433 x 309.





VOCATIONS CHALICE MINISTRY

Our Vocations Chalice program offers a wonderful way for households to diligently pray for vocations to the priesthood, religious life and lay ministry.

This "traveling chalice" is brought into homes for *a week* and that household prays for vocations.

Any household is encouraged to receive the chalice at the Mass they normally attend, take it home for a week, and return it prior to the next Mass.

Having the chalice in your home, at your kitchen table or family room is quite an uplifting experience for the entire household.

Included in the Chalice case is a journal of all the families who previously have taken the Chalice home. We ask each family to record their own experience before returning the case to the vestry before the 4:30 Mass

This practice is done weekly throughout the year. Please stop into the office to sign up or stop at the sign up table in the gathering space.

What a wonderful way for households to gather and pray as a family for vocations!

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

As Catholic Christians we are constantly being called to love one another (John 15: 12-13) and to show mercy where another person benefits from our selfless actions.

In the past we have limited this opportunity to our students preparing for Confirmation.

At St. Therese we are being called to follow a new path, a path that engages the whole family in the process of loving and serving one another as the Body of Christ.

We are asking all of our RE families to complete one (1) service project a year and to journal that project through words and pictures. Many of you are great at "scrap booking" and will no doubt be very creative in your efforts.

We will have opportunities at future G.I.F.T. gatherings to have you share the project and experience with our families if you volunteer to do so. Children can also do class presentations to share their story of helping others.

Some of the ways that families can complete this yearly effort of Discipleship are through:

McRest

The Giving Tree

St. Leo's Kitchen

Capuchin Kitchen

Walk for Warmth

Nursing Home Visits

Letters to the homebound or our Troops

Gleaners

Hospitality after the masses on Sunday

Parish Picnic

Serving at the altar as a family

Shelby Clean-Up Day

Adopt-A-Family

Fish Fry's

Pantry Needs

And Much More!



Children's Liturgy of the Word

During the 9:45 a.m. and 11:45 a.m. Mass each Sunday, from September through June, children in **Grades 1-5** are invited at the beginning of Mass to come forward and go into the Social Hall with a Leader and Assistant to hear the Sunday Readings.

These Readings are written age appropriate and offer an opportunity to learn about Jesus at their own level of understanding.

This should not be confused with the Preschool/ Kindergarten classes which are also being held during the 9:45 Mass for 3, 4 and 5 years olds. Children must be registered to attend this class.

There is no fee or registration for the Children' Liturgy of the Word.

We welcome any parent, grandparent, high school student or parishioner who would like to Lead or Assist during these Masses for Children's Liturgy. We know how precious time is so the more people that volunteer, the more your rotation is reduced.

We currently do not offer Children's Liturgy of the Word during the summer months of July and August due to a lack of volunteers.

Mrs. Eleanor Kwiatkowski and **Mrs. Tricia Beaudet** currently organize and schedule this program.

**If you are interested in helping out please call the office or email
re@stthereseparish.ws**