

Christian Formation Staff
Office Phone: (586) 792 - 0550

Pastor	Rev. Ray Lewandowski
Director of Religious Education	Brenda Manzo
Religious Ed. Section Head (Grades 5-8)	Marie Miller
Religious Ed. Section Head (Grades 1-4)	Annie Kupiec
Office Secretaries	Sharon Dettmer Diane Ciesiolka

Office Hours

Monday:	8:30 am – 8:30 pm
Tuesday:	8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Wednesday:	8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Thursday:	8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Sacramental Preparation Programs

The parish Christian Formation staff coordinates sacramental preparation for both the Children’s Faith Formation program and St. Thecla School. Parents interested in having their child receive a sacrament will be invited to attend an orientation gathering to register their child for preparation.

Reconciliation and First Communion

Requirements:

- **Weekly attendance at Mass as a family.**
- **Child must be in at least the second grade.**
- **Child must have attended the Children’s Faith Formation or a Catholic school last year.** If your child was not enrolled, he/she will need to be enrolled this year and the sacraments will be delayed until next year.
- **Registration and orientation into the sacramental preparation processes.**
- **Parental involvement in child’s faith formation, especially at workshops.**
- **Copy of child’s Baptismal certificate.**

While it is still intended that the **parent is the primary educator of the child**, the parish will offer you the best supplementation possible to assist you in preparation. In order to do this we will be working closely with you and your child throughout the year.

From October to May, the Children’s Faith Formation class will focus on the reception of two sacraments: Reconciliation and Eucharist. During this time, the materials provided at the parent orientation, along with classroom activities and a preparation workshop will help assist the parents in their role of preparing the child for his/her sacraments.

The first semester will highlight Reconciliation and close with two group celebrations of this sacrament in January.

The second semester will highlight Eucharist and end with celebrations of First Holy Communion in the spring.

Curriculum

All of the textbook series we use in the Faith Formation programs are approved through the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Grades K-8	Silver Burdett & Ginn “Blessed Are We”
Grades 4- 8	Sadlier “God’s Own Making”

Discipline

Your child is expected to conduct him or herself in a manner, which shows respect for his trained catechist and staff, fellow students and the property he/she uses.

- a) If your child exhibits uncontrollable behavior, he/she will be removed from class to spend the rest of the hour in the Christian Formation office.
- b) If this situation occurs twice and it appears that we have an unchanging behavioral problem, the child will not be readmitted to class until a conference with the parent, child and Director of Religious Ed. takes place to determine what would be the best learning environment for the child.

Students are *prohibited* from bringing in any item that does **NOT** pertain to the Faith Formation class. This includes toys, phones, ipods, food, or CD players. If these items are brought in they will be confiscated and not returned until the child’s parent comes to the Christian Formation office to collect the item.

Dress Code

Students in the Faith Formation program are expected to comply with standards of acceptable moral decency while attending sessions or prayer services in Church.

Visitors

All visitors **MUST** report to the CF office. Children are not allowed to bring visitors to their classrooms without prior approval from the Christian Formation office.

Please, discuss these policies with your child so he/she is aware of the consequences of unacceptable behavior.

Welcome to St. Thecla Christian Formation. We are happy that you have chosen our staff to help assist you in fulfilling your responsibilities in forming and educating your child in his/her faith.

Philosophy

Catechesis is a word of Greek origin meaning “to echo, to resound and to proclaim.” It is an official ministry of the Catholic Church and centers on sharing the message of the Gospel, presenting Christian values and principles, building community and leading people to service and prayer.

The Christian Formation staff recognizes that Christian growth takes place in a community context and that Christian faith, as a way of life, grows and is strengthened through worship and prayer and leads to action and service. Faith formation is from womb to tomb, thus family and community are an integral focus for all of our programs.

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This booklet will provide you with information and policies pertaining to the Religious Education Program at St. Thecla.

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Parent Information

Parents are the primary catechists of their children. It is important that they create an environment in the home where Christian values and attitudes can be fostered. Their participation in adult formation sessions, parent sacramental meetings and liturgy fosters a strong example for ongoing Christian Formation.

At the start of each new school year the Christian Formation staff will hold a parent/ child orientation and prayer service. This orientation and prayer service will acquaint parents with the program, staff and resources available to them.

Class Schedules and Times

Classes meet weekly from October through May with time off for Christmas, Winter break, Easter and Spring break. **When public school is canceled for a snow day, then religious ed. classes are also canceled.**

The office issues an overall yearly calendar at the beginning of the school year. The days and times are as follows:

Day	Grade	Time
Monday	grades K – 8	5:00 pm – 6:15 pm
Monday	grades K – 8	6:45 pm – 8:00pm

Attendance

Students need to attend classes regularly. If a catechist feels a student has not completed the material sufficiently, the family will be notified. The work must be completed before advancing to the next grade level.

Second and eighth grade students may miss no more than 4 classes to be eligible for Sacramental Preparation. All absences must be reported to the Christian Formation office.



Class Arrival

Kindergarten and Grades 1–8 will meet in a designated classroom in St. Thecla School. For safety, children should arrive **no earlier than 10 minutes before class time.**

Class Dismissal

Parents are asked to observe the parking flow guidelines in the school parking lot. Students will be dismissed from their classrooms when the bell rings. **The younger children (K – grade 2) will not be dismissed from their classrooms until an older sibling or an adult picks them up.**

Faculty

All catechists have completed a criminal background check and have completed or are in the process of completing the Archdiocese’s “Protecting God’s Children” program. They are also working towards or have 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 regularly with their Sectional Coordinator to plan and coordinate lessons. Continuing of enrichment is required annually for those who have completed training and are certified.

Academics

Children’s capabilities are different and each student is expected to work to his/her potential. Unit reviews will be administered on doctrinal material in each unit. Students are expected to exhibit an understanding of the material.

You, the parent, are the primary catechist of your child. To help your child with class work and to prepare him/her for reviews, we suggest the following:

1. Read and discuss the lesson each week.
2. Teach your child prayers found in the back of text.
3. Work each week with your child on completing work that will be sent home and needs to be returned.

Your interest in your child’s religious education will make it more worthwhile to him/her.

Bringing textbooks to class each week is a necessity. Teach your child responsibility by encouraging this practice from the first week of class. If a text is lost, you must purchase a new one from our office.

Confirmation

Preparing students for the Sacrament of Confirmation involves a partnership among the youth, their families, parishioners, catechists, and staff.

In seventh grade, the foundations of faith formation are presented in a classroom setting with an emphasis on Church history, prayer, sacraments, and an ongoing exploration of sacred scripture.

In eighth grade, students strengthen their faith by delving deeper into Catholic teachings and traditions. Emphasis is placed on the exploration of sacred scripture and the sacrament of Confirmation. Throughout the year, students are encouraged to develop their understanding of their commitment to the promises made for them at Baptism, and to discern the meaning of Confirmation in their lives.

Confirmation requires full intention and willingness. A young person entering into this sacramental preparation process must:

- **Be a baptized Catholic with a certificate on file in the CF office.**
- **13 years old or older**
- **Having completed 7th grade faith formation and completed or currently enrolled in 8th grade faith formation in the school or after-school process.**
- **Registered by a parent into the sacramental preparation process.**
- **Willing to profess the Catholic faith**
- **Willing to take on the role of a disciple of Christ**

The decision to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation is not one to be taken lightly for it involves both faith and commitment.

Confirmation preparation registration and parent orientation takes place in October.

Human Love Component of Religious Education

It is our belief that our Catholic young people need to know the positive values that we as a faith community hold in the area of human sexuality. Our Church has a wonderful message to tell about life and love, and we have an obligation to share it.

Parents will be asked to fill out and return a permission slip for their child/ren to attend this program.

St. Thecla Parish Children's Faith Formation

Family Handbook *2008 - 2009*



Christian Formation
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