

Faith ^{K-12} Formation *Handbook*

Sessions



**Fall Sunday
Sessions**



**Summer
Session**



**4921 Columbia Road
Grovetown, GA 30813
706-863-0252**

Get Your Sacraments!



First Reconciliation



First Holy Communion



Confirmation

Dear Parents and Guardians,

When you brought your child/children to the church for their Baptism, you received and accepted the responsibility of raising them in the Roman Catholic Faith. This is your loving response in thanksgiving to God for the incredible gift of life God has entrusted to you.

You have carried out this serious responsibility in many ways over the years. You have taught your children their prayers. You have told them the story of Jesus' birth at Christmas and how He loved us so much that He suffered, died, and rose again at Easter for our Salvation. You have taught them about forgiveness, concern and caring for others, especially those less fortunate than us. You have witnessed to them so many aspects of our Catholic Faith by the way you live and share your lives at home each day.



To further deepen their understanding of our Catholic Faith, you have enrolled them in our St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church Faith Formation program. It is vitally important that you support and reinforce the efforts of our Faith Formation Program at home by reviewing the weekly class work with your children. As a parent or guardian, you must make the weekly attendance at the Faith Formation classes a top priority in your child's life. I am incredibly pleased and proud of our Faith Formation staff and the many volunteer Catechists who so diligently wasn't to assist you in passing on our Catholic Faith. We have your children in a Faith Formation class or activity for approximately thirty-six hours the entire year! Sports, music, art, scouting and other activities should be planned around your children's Faith Formation class. I trust that every Catholic parent and guardian wants to give their children a rock-solid foundation based on God with which they will build their lives on.

As the Most Holy Eucharist is the center and pinnacle of Catholic life, it is most important that your family participate in Sunday Mass each week and Holy Days of Obligation throughout the year. Sunday Mass and daily prayer are a critical part of every Catholic's life. This is certainly a huge part of our integrity as Christians that we practice what we preach and teach.

I pray that in the coming months your children will grow in wisdom, grace, and age as they come to know Jesus better and deepen their understanding and appreciation of our Catholic Faith. My most fervent desire is that your children will develop and intimate, personal relationship and connection with God.

Your Servant in Christ,

Fr. Tim McKeown

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Faith Formation Program Overview

Welcome to an adventure in faith! Our Faith Formation program is a lifelong journey of growing closer to God. Parents are the heroes of this story, and we're here to support you in helping your children live out Catholic values. Together, we'll guide them to understand and love their faith.

Goals and Objectives

- **Support parents** as faith leaders in their families.
 - **Inspire spiritual growth** through fun and meaningful prayer and sacraments.
 - **Encourage family participation** in parish activities to build a vibrant community.
 - **Foster a personal relationship with Jesus** through stories, songs, and shared moments.
 - **Celebrate God's creation** by promoting stewardship and kindness.
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Sessions

Fall Sessions:

- **When:** Sundays, August to March, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM
- **Where:** Education Building and Activity Center

Summer Sessions:

- **When:** Two weeks in mid-July, Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM
- **Why It's Fun:** Start the day with Mass, learn through creative activities, and end with para-liturgies and community spirit. This condensed session is an exciting alternative to the fall program, offering the same faith formation experience in a shorter timeframe.

Note: Full attendance is required to complete the program successfully. Chronic tardiness, early pick-ups, or absences will result in your child not completing the curriculum for this level. Additionally, all families participating in the summer session are required to attend four other parish events throughout the year to complete the grade course credit.

Sacrament Classes

- **First Reconciliation & Holy Communion:** A joyful milestone, typically for 2nd graders, after two years of preparation.
 - **Sacramental Preparation** – Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion is a two-year process. Children must successfully complete both Year 1 and Year 2 of Faith Formation before celebrating these sacraments.
 - **First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion Retreat** – In February, all Communion Prep 2 students and at least **one parent or guardian** are required to attend our combined First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion Retreat. During the retreat, children will participate in engaging, age-appropriate sessions that prepare them to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation and continue preparing their hearts for First Holy Communion. While the children are attending their retreat, parents will participate in a formation session in the Parish Life Center (PLC) to better understand the sacraments and how to support their child's faith journey. Children will celebrate their First Reconciliation as part of this retreat.
 - **First Holy Communion Mass & Rehearsal** – First Holy Communion Masses are celebrated in **May on Mother's Day weekend**. A **mandatory rehearsal** for children and at least one parent or guardian will be held the evening before the First Holy Communion Mass to help families prepare for this joyful celebration.
 - **Photos & Video** - We kindly ask that there be no videotaping or photography during the Sacraments to maintain the reverence of the Mass and honor Jesus' presence. To help you cherish the memories of this special day, a professional photographer will take pictures before First Communion, including a large group photo available for purchase. Parents are welcome to take pictures before and after Mass in the church. However, during the Sacrament of Reconciliation, no photography or videotaping is allowed to ensure the privacy and sacredness of this moment. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!
 - **Confirmation:** A dynamic two-year journey that prepares your child for this meaningful sacrament! To celebrate this important step, students must complete both Year 1 and Year 2 of the preparation process. Throughout the program, Confirmandi will complete hands-on service projects and learn about their chosen Confirmation Saint, connecting them deeply to the spirit of the faith. We'll provide all the details and resources, including a Confirmation Packet, during an informative parent meeting (date TBD). The Confirmation ceremony itself will be scheduled in coordination with the Bishop's calendar—it's a truly special moment you won't want to miss!
 - **OCIC & High School OCIC:** These specialized classes replace regular Faith Formation classes and are tailored to help older students catch up on sacraments in a fun and engaging way. They provide a focused and meaningful experience for those who may have missed earlier sacramental preparation.
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Fees

Parishioner Tuition:

- \$50 for one child
- \$90 for two children
- \$120 for three children
- \$140 for four or more children
- **Please note:** Tuition is non-refundable.

Scholarships: Need assistance? Contact Mary Mauntel at [mmauntel@st-teresa.com](mailto:mmmauntel@st-teresa.com) to chat about options.

Curriculum

Our engaging curriculum, powered by Loyola Press (Finding God Series), is tailored for grades K-8. For Confirmation students, we use the "Chosen" program by Ascension Press, and for our RCIC program, we rely on resources from Our Sunday Visitor. Visit www.loyolapress.com to explore more fun and faith-filled topics.

Prayers

Prayers are like heartfelt conversations with God, building a beautiful connection! Each year, your child will dive into learning age-appropriate prayers—starting with the Sign of the Cross and journeying to the Apostles' Creed and beyond. A full list of these meaningful prayers is provided at the end of this handbook to support your family in nurturing faith together. Due dates for these prayers can be found on your child's class syllabus.

Communication

- **Stay Connected:** Effective communication between parents and the Faith Formation staff is essential for a smoothly running program. To keep you informed and involved, we request that every family provide a valid email address, phone number, and mailing address.

We utilize a platform called “Flock-notes” to share updates. It’s crucial to ensure your contact information is current. Each Friday, whether during the school year or summer session, we’ll send a “Flock-note” with important announcements and details. Grade-specific information will also be shared via email. This keeps everyone on the same page as we work together for the faith journey of your children!

Attendance and Registration

- **Attendance for Fall Faith Formation:**

- **Sacramental Preparation Years**

(First Communion & Confirmation)

Because preparation for the Sacraments requires consistent participation, the following attendance expectations apply to **all Communion and Confirmation years**:

- Students may have **up to 4 absences per program year**.
- **More than 4 absences** will require a **meeting with the Director of Faith Formation**.
- **More than 6 absences** will result in the student **repeating the year** before moving forward in sacramental preparation.

- **Non-Sacramental Grades**

(Grades not preparing for a sacrament)

To support consistent participation and learning:

- After **3 consecutive absences**, the family will be contacted.
- After **5 total absences**, a follow-up contact will be made.
- **7 or more absences** may result in a meeting with the Director, an alternative formation option, or withdrawal from the program.

- **Registration:** Our Faith Formation Program is an amazing journey that spans from Kindergarten through High School! To join the adventure, students need to be five years old by September 1 of the year they're entering Kindergarten. Let's make it a year full of faith, fun, and friendships! Register online at www.st-teresa.com/faith-formation.
- **Switching Classes:** Once the class roster is finalized, switching classes will not be allowed. If you have a specific request for your child to be placed with a certain teacher or in a particular classroom, please let us know by noting this on the registration form. To keep things running smoothly, please do not sign your child into a different classroom without approval from the Faith Formation Office.
- **New Students:** Bring a copy of your child's Baptismal record and any past Faith Formation attendance.
- **If you've moved or updated your phone number or email**, please let the Faith Formation Office know as soon as possible so we can stay in touch.
- **Medical Conditions:** We want to ensure the safety and well-being of all our children. If your child needs to take medication during class, please remember that a parent or guardian must administer it. If your child has any medical conditions, kindly let us know by filling out the registration form and sharing this information with the staff and catechists. In case of an emergency, we'll immediately contact 911, along with you and your emergency contact listed on the form. Thank you for helping us care for your child.
- **Food Allergies:** If your child has any food allergies, please let us know on the registration form. We'll make sure that the catechists and volunteers are aware and can take proper care to avoid any issues. We appreciate you keeping us informed so we can keep everyone safe and comfortable.

Closures and Cancellations: If a Faith Formation class or event needs to be canceled or postponed, we've got you covered! You'll receive a prompt Flock Note with all the details to keep you in the loop. And here's a handy rule of thumb: if Columbia County Schools close due to severe weather, we will too. Safety always comes first!

Arrival/Dismissal Policy

K-5th Grade Parents:

- You are **required** to **walk in and sign in** your child at drop-off and **sign out** at pick-up. Yep, rain or shine—consider it your daily step count!
- **Drop-off & Pick-up:** at the **Education Building**.
- **Siblings under 18 are NOT allowed** to drop off or pick up younger siblings. Nice try, but no shortcuts!

6th-12th Grade Parents:

- **Sign-in and sign-out are optional** for you, but your child must sign themselves in and out if you're skipping it.
- They'll also be **dropped off and picked up at either the Education Building or the Activity Center** depending on their class location.
- **Siblings under 18 are NOT allowed** to drop off or pick up younger siblings.

Arrival and Pick-Up Times:

- Summer
 - Students may arrive **no earlier than 8:00 AM**. We need coffee before we're ready for the morning rush!
 - Pick-up is **no later than 1:15 PM**. Seriously, we love your kids, but we like going home too.
- Fall
 - Students may arrive **no earlier than 10:25 AM**. Teachers need time to get their class ready.
 - Pick-up is at **12:00 PM**. Doors will open at **11:55 AM**.

Alternative Pick-Ups and Carpooling:

- If someone other than a parent or guardian will pick up your child, please **list their name on the registration form** or **provide a written note or email to Mary Mauntel**.
- If you're carpooling, supply the carpool details to the **Faith Formation office**.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact our **Faith Formation Staff**. We're here to help (and to make sure you don't leave anyone behind).

Dress Code

“No Shoulders, No Knees”

As part of our Faith Formation program, we help students grow in virtue, including an understanding of modesty and personal dignity. The way we dress is one small but meaningful part of that formation.

- **No shoulders:** Tops must have sleeves. Short sleeves are perfectly acceptable.
- **No knees:** Shorts are not permitted. Skirts and dresses should be modest in length. While knee-length is the guideline, skirts and dresses that fall close to the knee are considered acceptable.
- **Pants and jeans are welcome:** Both boys and girls may wear pants or jeans, provided they fit modestly and are free of excessive rips or tears.
- **Modest fit and coverage: Clothing should not be tight or see-through.** Leggings, yoga pants, or similar styles should be worn only **under a skirt or dress** that reaches mid-thigh or longer.
- **Appropriate messages and images:** Please avoid crop tops, low-cut shirts, and clothing with inappropriate logos, images, or messages.
- **Layers are encouraged:** Classrooms can vary in temperature, so students may wish to bring a light sweater.

We appreciate your support in helping us maintain a respectful learning environment for all students. If a student arrives out of dress code, a written notice will be sent home explaining the concern and how it can be corrected. Repeated dress code concerns may require a meeting with the Director of Faith Formation.

Discipline

Our Commitment to Respect and Community: We are called by Christ to love one another, and this love begins with mutual respect. Rules and guidelines aren’t just policies; they’re the foundation for a community of kindness and understanding. When you enroll in Faith Formation at St. Teresa of Avila, both parents and children agree to uphold these values. Our staff is dedicated to creating a loving, safe, and secure environment where every child can grow as a beloved child of God.

What We Expect:

- Be courteous and kind to peers and teachers.
- Arrive on time and ready to learn.
- Keep classrooms clean and tidy.
- Respect others’ property and rights.
- Be thoughtful and willing to help.
- Follow directions attentively.

Addressing Behavior Issues: If a child displays hurtful, destructive, or defiant behavior:

1. They will receive a warning.

2. Continued issues will result in a meeting with the Director of Faith Formation, and parents will be informed.

We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining a joyful and respectful environment for all our students!

Catechists and Volunteers

We LOVE our volunteers! Every teacher plays a vital role in shaping our children's faith journey. To ensure the best environment, all teachers are required to complete VIRTUS training, undergo a background check, and sign the diocesan Code of Conduct before teaching in our classrooms. Interested in joining us? Reach out to Mary Mauntel at mmauntel@st-teresa.com to learn more—training and smiles guaranteed!

VIRTUS: Protecting God's Children

- **Training:** All volunteers must complete VIRTUS training. Learn how we create a safe and happy environment at www.virtus.org.
 - **Protecting God's Children:** The Diocese of Savannah provides this important program as part of our commitment to ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for all children. Every year, the Faith Formation office presents this program to reinforce our dedication to protecting children from abuse. As a parent, you have the choice to determine if your child will participate. To help you make an informed decision, we strongly encourage you to review the "overview" and the "lesson plan" on the VIRTUS website at <https://www.virtus.org>.
 - **Photo / Video Release Form (included on your registration form):** When filling out your child's online registration form, you'll find a Photo/Video Release section. We value and respect your family's privacy, so please read through this form and confirm your acknowledgment. From time to time, we use photos in the parish Sunday bulletin to share the wonderful moments from our Faith Formation Classes. These photos not only give the parish community a glimpse of what the children are learning but also delight the kids who enjoy seeing themselves featured. Photos may also be included on our website, always with privacy and respect at heart.
Photos are strictly used for the Parish Sunday Bulletin or the Parish Website.
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Faith Formation Events

- **Living Rosary (October):** A hands-on way to bring the Rosary to life.
- **Vacation Bible School (June):** A week of crafts, songs, and stories to celebrate faith and fun.

Contact Information

Hours & Info

Our office is located in the Education Building, Room 12.

Our office hours are as follows: **Monday - Thursday: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Friday: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM .** Given the size of our campus, we may occasionally be difficult to find. To ensure that we are available when you arrive, we suggest scheduling an appointment ahead of time.

For more information, please visit our website: www.st-teresa.com/faith-formation

Director



Mary Mauntel

Director of Faith Formation

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Meet My Team



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Prayers & Teachings

of our Catholic Faith



Kindergarten

Sign of the Cross

Grade 1

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Grade 2

Act of Contrition

Hail Mary

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Grade 3

Glory Be Prayer

Act of Contrition

Hail Mary

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Grade 4

10 Commandments

Glory Be Prayer

Act of Contrition

Hail Mary

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Grade 5

7 Sacraments

10 Commandments

Glory Be Prayer

Act of Contrition

Hail Mary

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Grades 6-12

Apostles' Creed

7 Sacraments

10 Commandments

Glory Be Prayer

Act of Contrition

Hail Mary

Lord's Prayer

Sign of the Cross

Sign of the Cross

In the Name of the Father, The Son,
And the Holy Spirit, Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you whom I should love above
all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do
penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads
me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died
for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

Glory Be Prayer

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

10 Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

7 Sacraments

1. Baptism
2. Confirmation
3. Eucharist
4. Penance & Reconciliation
5. Anointing of the Sick
6. Holy Orders
7. Matrimony

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.