



## Faith Formation Parent Handbook

### St. Theresa of the Child Jesus Parish

1230 Merle Hay Road, Des Moines, IA 50311-2098

**Parish Office Phone: (515) 279-4654 Parish Office Fax: (515) 277-0838**

**Parish Website: [www.sainttheresaiaowa.org](http://www.sainttheresaiaowa.org)**

**Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm**

#### Parish Staff

|                                        |                     |                                                                |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fr. Raphael Assamah, Pastor            | (515) 279-4654 x301 | <a href="mailto:rassamah@stsdsm.com">rassamah@stsdsm.com</a>   |
| Fr. Mike Mahoney, Associate Pastor     | (515) 279-4654 x302 | <a href="mailto:mmahoney@stsdsm.com">mmahoney@stsdsm.com</a>   |
| Dcn. David Schmidt, Pastoral Associate | (515) 279-4654 x308 | <a href="mailto:dschmidt@stsdsm.com">dschmidt@stsdsm.com</a>   |
| Kenneth Seymour Parish Manager         | (515) 279-4654 x303 | <a href="mailto:kseymour@stsdsm.com">kseymour@stsdsm.com</a>   |
| Tatia Eischied, Parish Secretary       | (515) 279-4654 x300 | <a href="mailto:teischied@stsdsm.com">teischied@stsdsm.com</a> |
| Emily Melcher, Communication           | (515) 279-4654      | <a href="mailto:emelcher1@stsdsm.com">emelcher1@stsdsm.com</a> |

|                            |                     |                                                                  |
|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| John McMichael, Accountant | (515) 279-4654 x305 | <a href="mailto:jmcmichael@stsdsm.com">jmcmichael@stsdsm.com</a> |
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#### Faith Formation Staff

|                                                                   |                            |                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jane Ann Becicka,<br>Director of Evangelization & Faith Formation | Office (515) 279-4654 x304 | <a href="mailto:jbecicka@stsdsm.com">jbecicka@stsdsm.com</a> |
| Mary Pane, Confirmation & Youth Ministry<br>6th-12th grade        | Office (515) 279-4654      | <a href="mailto:mpane@stsdsm.com">mpane@stsdsm.com</a>       |
| Barb Woods, Adult Faith Formation/RCIA                            | Office (515) 279-4654 x307 | <a href="mailto:bwoods@stsdsm.com">bwoods@stsdsm.com</a>     |

#### Mass Times

Monday-Friday 6:30am; Wednesday school Mass 8:30am; Wednesdays & Thursdays 5:45pm

Saturday 7:45am, 4:30pm; Sunday 8:30, 10:30, 1:00 4:30

Holy days check bulletin or website for current schedule

#### Reconciliation

Saturday 8:30-9:30 am

First Friday of the Month 3:00 pm

Other times available by appointment, just call Fr. Raphael or Fr. Mike

#### Eucharistic Adoration

Tuesdays 7:00-8:00pm & First Friday of the Month 7:00am-6:00pm

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## St. Theresa Lifelong Faith Formation Vision Statement

*Faith Formation at St. Theresa Parish is an ongoing collaborative ministry. It encompasses all aspects of parish life so that each baptized person will more fully understand his or her faith and live it at all times and in all places. Faith Formation will be nurtured in our parish by providing a variety of opportunities through prayer, liturgy, sacraments, service, catechesis and community.*

### The Foundations of Faith Formation

**Faith Formation applies the Six Essential Tasks of Catechesis**

- Knowledge of the Faith
- Liturgical Life
- Moral Formation
- Prayer
- Community
- Missionary Spirit



**We also incorporate the Four Pillars of Stewardship, which richly complement the tasks of catechesis**

- Formation
- Prayer
- Hospitality
- Service



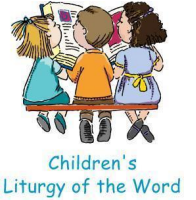
Faith Formation is a lifelong process that promotes an environment of Christian values and spiritual growth to nurture a vibrant relationship with Jesus in service to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

**Family Involvement** At the time of each child's baptism, parents accept the responsibility and duty of teaching their child in the knowledge and practice of the Faith. At St. Theresa Parish we recognize parents are the primary educators of their children- sharing their experiences, values, stories, customs and faith. We believe that the holiness a child experiences begins in the home. Parish Faith Formation assists and supports parents and families in this remarkable task. As partners, we assist in promoting a durable and living relationship with God, living life as God calls each one to live.

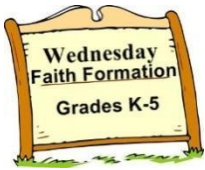
### Programs for Pre-K – High School

## Register Here [Faith Formation Registration 2026-27](#)

**Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)** Level 1: Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and 1st Grade (ages 3-6) and Level 2: 1st & 2nd Grades. CGS meets most Wednesdays during September through April. Children learn about God and His love for them by using Montessori-based teaching through songs, bible stories, activities and prayer. Please register.



**Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLW)** meets most Sundays during the school year at 10:30am Mass. Children in grades Pre-K through 2nd (ages 4-8) Grade are dismissed from the assembly during Liturgy of the Word to participate in scripture sharing at their level. Parents or older siblings are welcome! No registration required.



**Wednesday Faith Formation (WFF)** for Pre-Kindergarten-2nd grade CGS 6:15-7:30pm and 3rd-5th grades 6:30-7:30pm. Meets most Wednesday evenings from September through April. Children grow in faith by learning about Jesus' life & teaching, Church tradition & liturgy and our holy heroes, the Saints. Please register.

**Middle School Faith Formation** for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades meets 6:30-7:30pm on Wednesday evenings in the school gym. Sessions include prayer, study, service and social events that reinforce Catholic faith fostered in the home. The typical format consists of opening prayer, icebreaker or game, scripture, activity, discussion and closing prayer. Please register.

**High School Faith Formation** for 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades meets 6:30-7:30pm on Wednesday evenings in the parish hall. Three avenues for learning and faith-sharing are teaching, social activities and topic/issue sessions. Please register.

## Sacraments

**First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion** preparation typically occurs for children during 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade. We will need a copy of your child's baptism certificate if your child was not baptized at St. Theresa parish. Contact Jane Ann Becicka if your child has not yet been baptized or if he/she needs preparation after 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade. Please register.

**Confirmation Preparation** begins in 9<sup>th</sup> grade 6:30-8:00pm on Wednesday evenings. This Sacrament prepares youth to live as Catholic Christian disciples through study, prayer, and discernment. If you are past 9<sup>th</sup> grade, you may still prepare for Confirmation. Please register.

**Curricula** To support parents in the faith formation of their children, St. Theresa Catholic Parish uses the

following classroom materials:

**Catechesis of the Good Shepherd - *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd USA***

**Children's Liturgy of the Word - "*Children Celebrate*" published by Pflaum Publishers**

**1st Reconciliation & 1st Eucharist - *Be My Disciples* published by Benziger Press**

**Wednesday Faith Formation - *Be My Disciples* published by Benziger Press**

## Registration and Tuition

Faith Formation Registration must be complete for children to participate in Faith Formation sessions.

**Click link to register**    [Faith Formation Registration 2026-27](#)

### Tuition

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| One child                 | \$100.00 |
| Two children              | \$200.00 |
| Three or more             | \$250.00 |
| HS, not confirmation prep | \$50.00  |

\*No family or child will be turned away for financial reasons. Contact the faith formation coordinators to arrange a payment plan or scholarship.

## Attendance

Consistent attendance is important for children to gain the maximum benefit from participation in faith formation sessions. If your Pre-K to 5th grade child cannot attend, please email or call Jane Ann Becicka before 5:00pm at [jbecicka@stsdsm.com](mailto:jbecicka@stsdsm.com) or (515)279-4654 x304.

For students in grades 6-12, contact Mary Pane at [mpane@stsdsm.com](mailto:mpane@stsdsm.com) or (515) 279-4654 x215.

**Drop off** For the safety of all, walk your child into the building under the canopy.

- Pre-K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade parents, please wait with your child outside the classroom until your catechist arrives.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students, wait with the downstairs hall monitor until your catechist arrives.

**Pick up** For the safety of all, come into the building to pick up your child.

- Pre-K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade parents meet your child outside his/her classroom. Make sure the catechist knows that you have picked up your child.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade parents, pick up your child in the downstairs hallway. Make sure your child's catechist knows that you have picked up your child.
- **6th-8th graders** enter through the school doors under the canopy, check out with your catechist before you leave.

**Playground:** for safety, children may be on the playground if they are under the supervision of a parent or guardian.

## Closings & Cancellations

Emergency closings or cancellations will be announced via email, text or KCCI Channel 8. Since our parish families come from a wide range of area cities, please exercise caution based on your own area's situation.

## Catechists

Catechists from the parish community offer the richness of our Catholic Tradition in a classroom setting. Catechists are expected to be in good standing with the Church. They are required to complete safe environment training (VIRTUS) and a background check to help provide a safe environment for children. Catechists are also encouraged to participate in faith formation experiences, in-service meetings, and other opportunities that enhance their own spiritual lives and catechetical skills. Confirmed high schoolers may assist catechists at the discretion of the director. Contact Jane Ann Becicka to volunteer.

## Behavior

In order to foster a Christian atmosphere of hospitality, caring and courtesy and to promote maximum learning in the classrooms, the following guidelines are used:

- Students attending Faith Formation Programs are expected to treat themselves, one another and all properties with respect and to demonstrate Christian-like conduct at all times.
- If concerns arise, catechists and staff approach the situation with an attitude of Christian reconciliation.

**Dress Code** Modest dress should be the guide for all attire, especially for reception of sacraments.



### Electronics: cell phones, ear pods, etc.

All personal electronic devices must be out of sight and not in use once students enter the building unless directed by the catechist for class purposes. Devices that are out without catechist direction will be safely held by the catechist, hall monitor or director until the session is over.