

St. Mother Theodore Guerin Parish

*I am the Vine
You are the Branches*

John 15:5



*Religious Education
Parent Handbook 2026-2027
Religious Education Office
(708) 453-2555 ext. 5017*

A Parent's Prayer

*Loving God,
You are the giver of all we possess,
the source of all of our blessings.
We thank and praise you.*

Thank you for the gift of our children.

*Help us to set boundaries for them,
and yet encourage them to explore.
Give us the strength and courage to treat
each day as a fresh start.*

*May our children come to know you, the one true God,
and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

*May your Holy Spirit help them to grow
in faith, hope, and love,
so they may know peace, truth, and goodness.*

*May their ears hear your voice.
May their eyes see your presence in all things.
May their lips proclaim your word.
May their hearts be your dwelling place.
May their hands do works of charity.
May their feet walk in the way of Jesus Christ,
your Son and our Lord.
Amen.*

Loyola Press



St. Mother Theodore Guerin Religious Education Program Statement of Catechetical Purpose

St. Mother Theodore Guerin Religious Education Program enables children and their families to participate in and learn about the Catholic faith. Our program aims to lead families to worship and prayer and motivate our children to Catholic Christian living and service.

The Catechists and Administration recognize the importance of dealing with each child as a unique person on his/her own path of faith development. The child will come to deepen his/her faith through age appropriate materials and the guidance and example of the Catechists.

The Catechists who participate in our Religious Education Program are all volunteers and are very dedicated to the ministry of instructing and sharing the Catholic faith. The Catechists are constantly growing in their faith and Catechetical training.

The Religious Education Program strives to promote a family centered effort in the formation of Christian values by supporting parents in their role as primary religious educators in the life of their children in their efforts to reinforce classroom lessons, and in their encouraging of daily prayer in the home that are age appropriate. **Attending Mass as a family, including Holy Days of Obligation, is the best way for parents to teach their children.**

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The St. Mother Theodore Guerin Religious Education Program (“the Program”) is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, a corporation sole, in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The Program does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color or national origin in admission policies, administration of its policies, supplementary programs, or any other program-based function.

INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

It is important that your child attend religious education classes each year from 1st grade through Confirmation II (8th grade). The consistent enrollment of your child provides him/her with a supportive context through which the developmental stages of faith can be experienced. Additionally, the entire Religious Education Program community is strengthened by your child's continued participation.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM LOCATION AND SCHEDULE

Saturdays-St. Celestine School 9:30-11:30 a.m.

September 19, 26

October 10, 24

November 7, 21

December 5, 12

January 9, 23

February 6, 20

March 6, 20

April 10, 24

Students may enter the school at 9:15 a.m. from the main entrance on 77th Avenue.

HEALTH SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Masks-Masks remain optional for all parishes within the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 or any illness should stay home while sick.

Each student should have their own hand sanitizer and water bottle. Also, students should bring a pencil case using their own pencils and pens.

ATTENDANCE

It is important that students be regular and punctual in attendance. In case of absence, please contact the Religious Education Office.

Pastoral Center-708 453-2555 ex. 5017 call between 8:30-9:00 a.m.
Ruthanne Swiatkowski or email rswiatkowski@stguerinparish.org

If a child misses more than 3 classes without a valid reason, the Director of Religious Education (DRE) and Catechist will ask to meet with the parents to address this issue. Students are responsible for the assigned reading and homework when absent from class.

TARDINESS

If a student arrives late, he/she must report to the School Office. Catechists will record when a child is tardy for class. Parents/Guardians will be contacted if a student is repeatedly tardy.

EARLY DISMISSAL

A student will not be dismissed during class hours without a written request from a parent or guardian. The parent or guardian may come for the child or make other arrangements to have the child picked up. Parents/Guardians should report to the School Office—not the child's classroom.

EMERGENCIES

Authorization for Medical Treatment:

An emergency form will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Please complete and return the form immediately. In case of an accident, you will be notified. If you cannot be reached, we will call the person your emergency contact. Please inform the person that his/her name is listed.

Medication:

Except in extraordinary circumstances that must be approved by the DRE, Program personnel will not maintain, supervise the taking of, or administer medication.

Emergency Procedures:

Procedures for fire will be in place and will be in accordance with commonly accepted current practices

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

If the St. Mother Theodore Guerin Religious Education Program needs to close because of severe weather, heating or water problems, an email from the Religious Education Office will be sent to parents. Also, the emergency closing would be announced over radio stations WGN –720 AM, WBBM – 780 AM or TV channels CBS Ch. 2, NBC Ch. 5, ABC Ch. 7, FOX 32 or CLTV. Information may also be obtained from the Emergency Closing Center or online at www.EmergencyClosings.com.

CUSTODY ISSUES

If parents are divorced or separated, the St. Mother Theodore Guerin Religious Education Program presumes that both parents have access to the children and to the children's records unless one parent can provide evidence that he or she has the sole right.

VISITORS

For the safety and protection of the children enrolled in the program all visitors are asked to report to the Religious Education Office and identify yourself.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM CODE OF CONDUCT

The St. Mother Theodore Guerin Religious Education Program seeks to provide an environment that will allow children to learn, experience, and grow as members of our Christian community. A partnership between children, parents and catechists is necessary to achieve this. The Code of Conduct encourages children to be accountable for their behavior. They are expected to be courteous to other children and adults. Every person who chooses to belong to and to worship and has the right to participate in an environment that fosters reverence and respect for God, Church and each other.

Code of Conduct:

- Be on time to class
- Bring books and folders to class
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Raise your hand to speak. Do not interrupt others.
- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.

- Use encouraging words, no put-downs or name-calling.
- No gum chewing or candy.
- Inappropriate clothing is not permitted. T-shirts that display loud decorations or disrespectful language are not permitted.
- No cell phones, Gameboys, IPODS or other electrical devices. **Cell phones must be kept in tote/book bag.**

Consequences of Inappropriate behavior:

The catechists, supported by the DRE, will discuss the consequences of inappropriate behavior with the child in general terms. At all times, catechists will attempt to administer discipline with dignity for the child.

Most behavior problems can be resolved between the Catechist and the parents if the situation is approached with a spirit of cooperation. The goal is the same – to create an atmosphere in which learning can take place.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Communication between parent, student, catechist and the Religious Education Office is vital to the success of the program. Please check your email or your child's folder for any notes which may be distributed during class time. Parents may request a conference with their child's teacher and the DRE at any time during the year. A written progress report provides a formal means of feedback from your child's catechist as to your child's understanding of the concepts in the program.

TUITION AND FEES 2026-2027

\$185-Tuition for 1 child per family plus \$50 Registration fee = \$235

\$290-Tuition for 2 children per family plus \$50 Registration fee per child = \$390

\$395-Tuition for 3 children per family plus \$50 Registration fee per child = \$545

Tuition may be paid in full upon Registration (\$50 due) or in two installments with the 1st Semester due September 26, 2026 (\$95-1 child, \$145-2 children, \$200-3 children) and the 2nd Semester due January 23, 2027 (\$90-1 child, \$145-2 children, \$195-3 children)

There is a \$20 Book Replacement fee.

- ◆ Tuition payments may be submitted to the Religious Education/ Office during class hours. It would be appreciated if your payment is in submitted in an envelope with your child's name. Please do not give the tuition payment to your child or submit to the Catechist.

- **You may also pay online using the link below:**

<https://www.givecentral.org/customizable-online-giving/313/event/47193>

Please contact the DRE should you need to discuss a special financial arrangement. All such communication will remain confidential.

SACRAMENTS

All children must have two (2) consecutive years of religious education prior to receiving any Sacrament. The formal religious education takes place within the parish program. **The informal preparation and guidance takes place within the home; bringing your children to Mass, helping your children learn their daily prayers.**

Only children who demonstrate the proper readiness will be permitted to receive the Sacrament. Excessive absences result in lack of preparation to receive the Sacrament.

First Reconciliation and First Communion are received in Grade 2 or the second year of Religious Education for middle grade students.

Confirmation /Grade 7 & 8

Confirmation preparation is a two-year program. Community service at church, home, school and in your community is required. The Sacrament of Confirmation will be received in the fall of the student's Freshman year. Confirmation preparation teaches the student the responsibility of being a disciple of Christ in their daily lives.

Sacramental Fees

There are additional fees for children who will receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation during the 2026-2027 school year. Additional information will be provided when the student begins the preparation for the Sacraments.