

St. Theresa Church

Family Ministry & Youth Ministry

Parent & Student Handbook



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Dear Parish 'Ohana,

Welcome to our parish catechetical program. The purpose of this program is to follow Christ's call "to proclaim the Good News everywhere in the world and to hand his message on to successive generations by professing, living and celebrating the faith..." (National Directory of Catechesis #15).

In our parish, the pastor, working with parents and those in catechetical ministry, plans and carries out this catechetical mission. This handbook has been designed to provide general information and requirements for participation in the parish catechetical ministry. The parish reserves the right to amend this handbook as necessary. Parish families will be notified if changes are made to any procedure or information contained in this handbook. We hope this serves to enhance communication and provide a clear presentation of expectations and responsibilities of students and their families. In the long run, we hope it makes family life easier!

In the National Directory for Catechesis, the U.S. Bishops remind us that it is in the parish that the faithful are "energized to carry out Christ's mission." It is here that the "spiritual, moral and material support for the regular and continuing catechetical development of the parishioners" is provided. (NDC, #60) Furthermore, the family is considered the domestic church whereby parents are the first teachers of faith who are responsible to pray and nurture their children in the way of faith and love.

We are blessed and honored to walk this journey of faith with you. It is in working together that we are the Body of Christ and carry our His mission.

May the Lord bless our efforts,

Fr. William Kunisch, Pastor

Karen R. Powers, Coordinator

St. Theresa Parish Motto

Rooted in Jesus, we love and serve others.

Our Mission

St. Theresa, a Catholic community in Kihei, called to be disciples of Jesus, seeks to:

Faithfully model Jesus according to His work

Become a welcoming, loving and caring community

Grow in our faith and spirituality through
the Eucharist, the Sacraments, prayer and study

Put faith into action through full and active participation in our parish and community

Practice stewardship in our parish and community

Our Calling

Model Jesus

Become Community

Grow in our faith and spirituality

Put faith into action

Practice stewardship

Our Vision

Faith in action, building community where all can thrive in love, hope and dignity

PARENTS/GUARDIANS RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents are the first and primary teachers of their children in their way of faith. According to the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: "The family, in its own way, is the domestic church." This means that it is in the context of the family that we first learn who God is and to prayerfully seek His will for us. You can depend on our assistance in helping you help your child learn their prayers and participate in the parish catechetical program and other enriching activities of parish life. In the following bullet points, you will find some suggestions on how to build your 'domestic church'.

- Accompany your child to Mass each week, Holy Days of obligation and frequenting the Sacraments.
- Celebrating Sunday night family dinners at home and talking about the weekly topic.
- Bringing the child or youth to Family Ministry/Youth Ministry sessions.
- Taking time for family prayer and keeping alive the traditional prayers (Rosary, Our Father, Hail Mary, Creed, bedtime, meals, etc.)
- Showing interest in the parish community especially by volunteering your time and talent. In maintaining a safe environment for our children, all volunteers must attend Safe Environment Training.
- Teaching stewardship and charity to your children, through word and example.
- Reading all correspondence whether sent home or through digital platforms such as Flocknote, email, etc.
- Keeping the Family Ministry and Youth Ministry calendar in the home for ready reference of special events, session dates, etc.
- Helping your child celebrate the Liturgical Year and the special seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter.

PARENT FAITH FORMATION

The commitment to enriching your own faith life is of great importance. In effort to help parents foster the faith we will provide ongoing faith formation sessions for adults Tuesdays, 6-7:30pm, beginning September. Parents can also find many resources on the sacraments on the Formed platform and sign up for free at www.formed.org/signup

CUSTODY OR LEGAL AGREEMENTS

It is the responsibility of both biological parents to provide the parish with the latest, Child Custody Agreement. If a court order prohibits our releasing a child into the custody of a non-custodial parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the Coordinator with an official copy of the custody agreement. If a child is living with someone other than the parent(s) or guardian, permission from either parent(s) or guardian must be obtained before the child may be registered in Family Faith Formation and Youth Ministry. In cases of joint custody, permission from both parents must be secured beforehand in writing.

CATECHIST

Working with the Coordinator are Catechists (teachers of faith) who volunteer as assistants to the parents. These dedicated stewards are instruments of God's love and signs of the Holy Spirit's presence. The catechist role is to help the parents journey with their child's faith formation and not to replace the vital role parents have as the primary catechist.

NOTE: In the Diocese of Honolulu, all volunteers who have substantial contact with children and youth under the age of eighteen (18) are required to complete the Diocese of Honolulu Safe Environment Training and have a background check. This can be arranged by contacting the Coordinator.

FAMILY MINISTRY

Family Ministry (formerly known as Catechism, CCD or Religious Education) sessions are held from September to May. A calendar is provided for each family upon registration and on our website.

Children in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 5th along with their parents, meet on a scheduled Sunday each month from 8:15am—9:15am in the Parish Hall. Families will also receive take home material to have meaningful conversations with each other about the Sunday Mass readings.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Ministry is for 6th-12th grades. Youth Group nights are held on Wednesdays at 6:30pm from September to May in the Youth Room (St. Clare Room). The Life Teen/EDGE Program is utilized during the Youth Ministry sessions. Life Teen/EDGE is a Eucharist-centered movement within the Roman Catholic Church which leads these youth and their families into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church. With the Blessed Virgin Mary as our intercessor and guide, Life Teen/EDGE seeks to unleash the fullness of the Sacramental power present within the young Church.

TRANSFERS

All students transferring from the mainland or another parish catechetical program or Youth Ministry must present a letter from the previous program Director stating the number of years they have completed in the program.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

A Sacrament is an outward sign of God's inward grace. Any child wishing to receive a Sacrament must have at least one full year of Family Ministry and Youth Ministry sessions prior to the Sacramental year itself. The full year will help the child to learn their basic prayers, attend weekly Mass with their family and build community with parishioners and peers.

Baptized children who are in the second grade or older that have faithfully attended Family Ministry and/or Youth Ministry sessions for at least one full year and have been properly catechized may celebrate the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion. In preparation for this celebration, parents, with the help of sponsor, are required to:

- Attend all class sessions with their child
- Attend necessary parent meetings, readings, and rehearsal
- Work, play, talk and pray with the child at home
- Attend the celebration of the Sacraments. Family members are encouraged to participate in the actual Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion as a witness to their child.

Children, along with their sponsor or parent, are expected to attend all Sacrament class sessions and must not have more than three un-excused absences.

The requirements will be explained further at the time of Sacramental Preparation. There is an additional fee for supplemental materials used for each Sacrament.

ADMISSION AND FEES

All families enrolling their child/children in the Family Ministry and Youth Ministry Programs are first required to register in the Parish. Forms are available in the parish office and can be found on our parish website. A copy of the Baptism certificate must be provided to the office at the time of registration. Birth certificates are required if your child is not yet baptized.

FORMS

Parents will need to complete and submit the following forms to register their child/children:

- Parish Registration Form (for new parishioner)
- Student Registration (available online)

⇒ Safe Environment (available online)

All forms are available in our parish office and on our website. Please notify our office of any changes in mailing address, phone numbers, email addresses, emergency contacts or medical conditions.

FEES FOR FAITH FORMATION:

Family Faith Formation/Youth Ministry
\$50.00 one child

\$10.00 discount for 2nd child (\$90)

\$10.00 discount per child for 3 or more (\$120)

Fees are due at the time of registration. Children may not attend sessions until registration is completed. If any family cannot make payment, arrangements can be made with the Coordinator. **NO CHILD WILL BE TURNED AWAY BECAUSE OF AN INABILITY TO PAY.**

ATTENDANCE

Family Ministry is an ongoing lifetime process. Therefore, it is vital that all participate and be present. Since the teaching time is limited, families are expected to be on time. While other extracurricular activities play a significant role in the lives of the youth, it is equally important that Family Ministry and Youth Ministry sessions be given high priority on the child's schedule. Put God above all things!

DRESS CODE

Parents, children and teens are to come to sessions dressed appropriately. Casual clothing is permitted if you are not attending Mass directly following. Please, no short shorts, t-shirts with inappropriate pictures or wording, no hats/caps indoors.

MASS ATTIRE

Although there are no specific norms on dress code in Canon Law we challenge our families to dress up for Mass as a reverence for our Lord Jesus Christ and when receiving Him.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Students must act appropriately. They must show respect to all their brothers and sisters in Christ. We ask parents to be aware of the following:

- Children are to project an image of Christian consideration, sensitivity, and respect to everyone and to the property around them through language, dress and behavior.
- Children are to cooperate and participate in activities.
- Refrain from inappropriate touching and verbal or physical harassment.
- Refrain from use of electronics during sessions
- Refrain from using foul language.

DISCIPLINE

Disruptive behavior will be dealt with as follows:

- First incident, the child will be reminded of expected behavior and the consequences of misbehavior and incident will be documented.
- Second incident, the child will be separated from group and have discussion with CRE about appropriate behavior and incident will be documented.
- If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive it may be necessary for parent/guardian to discuss consequences of the child's misbehavior. Homeschooling may be a step to be considered.

WEAPONS, DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Our Parish campus is a drug, alcohol and weapon free campus. A student found possessing a weapon, using or distributing drugs or alcohol while on the parish premises, in the catechetical program or Church event, may be suspended or expelled from Youth Ministry. Any drugs, alcohol or weapons found will be seized immediately by the adult in charge and the parents/guardians will immediately be notified. Civil authorities may be consulted with regard to the enforcement of local and state laws.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Harassment, racial slurs, fighting, or other inappropriate (or gang-related) conduct among students will not be tolerated. Violations of this rule will warrant immediate notification of parents/guardians of the child involved, and may result in suspension or even dismissal from the program.

HEALTH CONCERNS

Health information is collected on the Medical Form. Catechists or other personnel are NOT allowed to dispense or administer medication to children.

FOOD POLICY

Food allergies are a growing health concern for many children. Parents and guardians of children who have food allergies MUST note it on the medical form so that all precautions can be taken.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

The following steps will be taken concerning a student who needs medical attention:

- Adult in charge of session will contact the Parent of child
- If Parent is unable to contact, the emergency contact on form will be contacted.
- In the event of a life-threatening emergency, 911 will be contacted for assistance.

CANCELLATION OF SESSIONS

When there is a cancellation due to weather or other emergencies the CRE will:

- Contact families via Flocknote or email.

CHILD AND ADOLESCENTS PROTECTION POLICY

In a pastoral effort to respond to a need for the protection of our children, the Diocese of Honolulu requires catechesis be given to parents, children and youth in all grades of

Parish Programs and Catholic Schools. Safe Environment Training will be held during a Sunday Formation for the entire family.

All priests, deacons, school administrators, teachers, youth ministers, parish catechists, support personnel, coaches, and other volunteers having “ongoing, unsupervised contact” with minors are required to attend training in the prevention and recognition of all forms of abuse against children. This program is provided online by the Diocese of Honolulu at <https://virtusonline.org>
All persons who have ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors in the Diocese of Honolulu will be required to complete a background check as part of the safe environment training.

Pursuant to state law, we are required to report suspected child abuse, and we will also follow all diocesan policies on such matters. If you have questions, feel free to contact the Director, of Safe Environment, Kristin Leandro at 808-203-6719 or email at kleadro@rcchawaii.org

ST. THERESA STAFF

Rev. William Kunisch, Pastor

Rev. Ornelo Cherrez, Hispanic Chaplain

Rev. Jim Orsini, Retired

Alex Nicholl, Director, Liturgy and Music

Karen Powers, Faith Formation and Youth Ministry

Shawn Wallen, Director, Hale Kau Kau

Maka Falekaono, Office Secretary

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook

St. Theresa Church Kihei, Maui, Hawaii

Instagram

[STC.family.faith](https://www.facebook.com/STC.family.faith)

[st.theresa.youth](https://www.instagram.com/st.theresa.youth)

IN CONCLUSION

This handbook is primarily a means of communication and providing information as how we intend to go about our work. We reserve the right to amend the information as necessary including dates of sessions, time and dates for the celebration of Sacraments. Do not hesitate to ask for clarification of the information or policies contained in this handbook. We are grateful to you as parents for your continued commitment to teach, pray and encourage your child in their spiritual growth and love for the Lord in our Catholic faith. Be assured of our prayers and support.